The Family Mosaic

Social Exclusion and Social Assistance:
A Longitudinal Study of Lone-parent
and Two-parent Families

NOVA SCOTIA
Community Services

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Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Policy and Research Context 3

Social and Economic Trends 3

Impacts of Social Assistance 6

Findings from the Family Mosaic Research Project 8

Poverty 8

Social-Assistance Usage by Mothers 11

Social-Assistance Usage by Young Adults 23

Summary of Key Points 43

Discussion 46

Divorce Laws 46

Child Support 47

Marriage and Teen Mothers 47

Reducing Teen Child-bearing 48

Employment Initiatives 53

Sources 60

Notes 74

Appendix

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Introduction

Over the last generation, fertility rates have dropped below replacement level, the percentage of children born into single-parent families has increased substantially, divorce rates have multiplied ten-fold, and women's labour-force participation rates have quadrupled (Dechman, 1995). The magnitude and speed of these changes have left us without a clear picture of what today's families really look like. Family life is both varied and dynamic. There are one and two-parent families; single and dual-earner families; blended, nuclear, and extended families. Families can be two-parent today and one-parent tomorrow; single-earner today and dual-earner tomorrow.

The Family Mosaic Project (FMP) provides policymakers, practitioners, and the public with information about the ever-changing realities of life in both one and two-parent families as children grow from infancy to adulthood. This project started over twenty years ago with a sample of 716[1] mothers who gave birth to their first child in a Nova Scotia hospital in 1978. The original sample was stratified on the basis of marital status. Half of the mothers were married when their first child was born and half were single when their first child was born. By drawing two comparable samples of married and single mothers, it is possible to give statistically-reliable estimates of outcomes for both family types. Weighting the data to compensate for the over-representation of single mothers also makes it possible to provide information on families in general.

Data collections for this project were conducted when the children were approximately 6 weeks, 9 months, 18 months, 10 years, and 20 years of age. The 6-week, 9-month, and 18-month data collections consisted of personal interviews with the mothers. The 10-year data collection consisted of personal interviews with mothers and psychological assessments of a sample of 223 of the children. The 20-year data collection consisted of telephone interviews with both the mothers and their sons or daughters, who were, by then, young adults. Seventy percent (N = 500) of the mothers who started the project in 1978 were still involved in the 1999 data collection. Eighty-six percent (N = 428) of the sons/daughters of these mothers also participated in the 1999 data collection. More detailed information on the study design and

associated questionnaires can be found in the Methodology Report (Dechman, 2001a).

Previous reports from the FMP have covered changes in family structure, social-support networks, mothers' educational pursuits, and mothers' employment patterns. This report focuses specifically on income and the social-assistance requirements of both mothers and their children. Future reports will examine outcomes for youth in the areas of education, employment, health, and well-being.

Social and Economic Trends

The 20-year interval encompassed by the Family Mosaic Project has been a time of significant social and economic change. The development of effective social policy for the 21st century depends on a solid understanding of the inter-related forces that underlie these changes.

Divorce rates have increased dramatically.

Changes to the divorce law in 1968 marked the beginning of an upsurge in marital dissolution across Canada. Nova Scotia witnessed a tenfold increase in the number of divorces granted between 1961 and 1981 (Dechman, 1995: 5-16). More recently, divorce rates have leveled off and even declined slightly (Dechman, 1995: 5-16; Statistics Canada, 1996a: 15).

There are more births to single mothers and common-law couples.

During the time that divorce rates were increasing, births to single mothers and common-law couples were also on the rise (Belle and McQuillan, 1994; National Council of Welfare, 1999b: 4). In 1978, when the FMP began, approximately 16 percent of the babies born in Nova Scotia hospitals had mothers who were not married (Nova Scotia Department of Health, 1978). By 1997, approximately 35 percent of the babies born in Nova Scotia hospitals had mothers who were not married (Statistics Canada, 1997a). Unlike the divorce rate, the trend toward increasing numbers of births to single mothers and common-law couples shows no sign of abating.[2]

The number of lone-parent families has increased.

The combination of more divorces and more births to single mothers has created a major increase in lone-parenting. Today, approximately 1 in 5 children live in a lone-parent family at any particular point in time and approximately half of all children will live in a lone-parent family at some time while they are growing up (Dechman, 2000a: 20; Lindsay, 1992: 9; Statistics Canada, 1997b: 1).

The composition of lone-parent families is changing.

In the early part of this century, most lone-parent mothers were widowed (Lindsay, 1992: 12). Over the course of the seventies and eighties, the composition of lone parents shifted to being primarily divorced (Lindsay, 1992: 10, 12). As divorce rates have leveled off and births to single mothers[3] have continued to climb, single mothers are coming to constitute an increasingly large percentage of lone parents (Lindsay, 1992: 10). Today, half of all lone parents with preschool-age children are single (Cleveland and Hyatt, 1996: 3).

The rate of births to teenage mothers has remained relatively constant.

Many people equate births to single mothers with teen pregnancy. However, the rate of births to teenage mothers has actually declined slightly (Dechman, 1995: 5-8, Caragata, 1999: 102; Statistics Canada, 2000: 7).

Virtually all teen mothers are now single.

While the probability of teenage child bearing has declined slightly, the young women who do have children in their teens are much less likely to be married today than they were in the past. In the fifties, the vast majority of teen mothers were married (Rindfuss, 1991: 503). By 1978, when the FMP began, approximately half (43 percent) of Nova Scotia teenage mothers were married (Nova Scotia Department of Health, 1978). Today, marriage among teenage mothers is rare. In 1997, only 4 percent of Nova Scotia teenage mothers were married (Statistics Canada, 1997a).

The economic well-being of young adults has deteriorated.

Over the past 20 years, the income level of youth in relation to older workers has declined (Morissette, 1997: 9 – 12; National Council of Welfare, 1999a: 37; Picot and Myles, 1995: 8). It is becoming increasingly difficult for young men, as well as young women, to find employment that would enable them to support a family (Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 1; Human Resources Development Canada, 1995: 2). This may have some bearing on the fact

that very few people now marry when they are in their teens (Miller, 1990: 42).

Families have become increasingly reliant on two incomes to maintain their standard of living.

The 1996 census results indicate that fewer than 20 percent of Nova Scotia husband-wife families now fit the traditional male-breadwinner model (McFadyen, 2000: 4). The wife's income is a necessity rather than a luxury for most families (National Council of Welfare, 1999b: 13).[4] Without the wife's income, the poverty rate would double for husband-wife households, taking almost one-quarter of these families into poverty (McFadyen, 2000: 5; Ross, 1997: 4).

Most lone-parent families are poor.

Because it often takes two incomes to support a family, approximately half of all lone-parent families are living in poverty (Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 33-34). Furthermore, both the incidence and depth of poverty among lone-parent families have been increasing (Ross, Scott, and Smith, 2000 : 113).

Teenage lone parents are particularly likely to be living in poverty.

Teenage child bearing is virtually synonymous with single parenting and teenage single parenting is virtually synonymous with poverty. Ninety-five percent of Nova Scotia lone-parent families where the head of the household is under 20 years of age, and 92 percent of Nova Scotia lone-parent families where the head of the household is 20 to 24 years of age, are living below the poverty line (Human Resources Development Canada, 2000a: 69).

Despite the cushioning effects of government transfers, both the incidence and depth of poverty continue to increase among young families (Picot and Myles, 1995: 11). Even young mothers with partners have bleak economic prospects. In the current labour market, it is difficult for many young two-parent families to raise their standard of living above the poverty line (Dooley, 1993: 116; National Council of Welfare, 1999b: 6).

Impacts on Social Assistance

The aforementioned social and economic trends have influenced both the numbers and types of families that require social assistance. Early social-assistance plans for lone parents served widows, whose husbands often had been killed in the war (Mead, 1996: 51). Since that time, the composition of lone parents on social assistance has changed along with changes in the general composition of the lone-parent population (Mead, 1996: 53). Today, few lone parents, and particularly few lone parents on social assistance, are widows (Lindsay, 1992: 10-12).[5]

Mothers who become lone parents because they are single when their child is born are more likely to require social assistance than are mothers who become lone parents through divorce (Cleveland and Hyatt, 1996: 17; Baker and Tippin, 1999: 84). While divorced lone parents still substantially outnumber single lone parents in the general population, there are more single than divorced lone parents among social-assistance recipients.[6]

A closer examination of single lone-parent social-assistance recipients also shows an increasing proportion of young single mothers. While social-assistance usage by older lone parents has been declining, social-assistance usage by younger lone parents has been increasing (Dooley, 1995: 46, 54 and 94). This trend may be linked not only to the declining employment prospects of the young mothers themselves but also to the declining employment opportunities of their children's fathers (Baker and Tippin, 1999: 84; Cleveland and Hyatt, 1996: vi; Dooley, 1995: 54).

The media often focus on social-assistance usage by lone-parent families, despite the fact researchers have demonstrated that mounting government debt and increased welfare costs have little to do with lone parenting *per se* (Baker and Tippin, 1999: 70; Dooley, 1995: 94). Even though lone parents may not be responsible for increases in social-assistance expenditures, they do form a significant proportion of the current social-assistance clients (National Council of Welfare, 1998: 28). Approximately one out of every four (27 percent) social-assistance cases are lone-parent families (National Council of Welfare, 1998: 9; Dooley, 1995: 35).[7] The proportion of lone parents among social-assistance clients is high not only because these families are more likely to require social assistance but also because lone

parents tend to require social assistance for longer periods of time than do two-parent families or unattached adults[6] (Cleveland and Hyatt, 1996: 15; Hick, 2000; Moffitt, 1992: 24; National Council of Welfare, 1998: 28; Baker and Tippin, 1999: 98).

The FMP offers a unique opportunity to compare and contrast the life courses of single, divorced, and continuously-married mothers. As single mothers constitute a growing proportion of lone parents, and an even faster increasing proportion of social-assistance recipients, it is particularly important to understand the circumstances of these mothers and their children as a basis for responsive social-assistance reforms.

Poverty

Given that two salaries are often needed to maintain an adequate standard of living, and that many lone parents have relatively low earning potential, it is not surprising the majority of female lone-parent households fall below the poverty line (Ross et al, 2000: 40).[9] The struggle for financial stability among lone-parent families is particularly difficult when children are young. In the FMP:

- 77 percent of mothers who did not have a partner in 1988 when their first child was 10 years old were living in poverty[10] (See Appendix Table 1).

- 42 percent of mothers who did not have a partner in 1999 when their first child reached 20 years of age were living in poverty (See Appendix Table 2).

This general trend of declining poverty rates in relation to the age of the child also is evident in Human Resources Development Canada's recent report *The Incidence of Low Income in Nova Scotia* (2000).[11]

There were a number of reasons why the poverty of lone-parent mothers in the FMP persisted even when children reached 20 years of age. Many of the mothers who were not married when their first child was 20 still had relatively low levels of education and little work experience. It also was not uncommon for these women to have other dependent children who were substantially younger than their first child. In comparison to continuously-married mothers, mothers who were single or divorced lone parents tended to have greater age ranges between their children.

Even though the poverty rates of lone-parent mothers declined somewhat as their children grew older, households with two adults were more likely to be able to maintain a sufficient standard of living at all stages of child rearing.

- Only, 17 percent of mothers who were married or living common law when their first child was 10 years of age were living in poverty.

- 5 percent of mothers who were married or living common law when their first child reached 20 years of age were living in poverty.

Persistent poverty was uncommon for mothers who were continuously married. Even when two-parent families experienced poverty, it was more transitory (See Appendix Table 3). Only 2 percent of continuously-married mothers, as compared to 17 percent of mothers who were lone parents at some time, were living below the poverty line at both the 10 and 20 year data collections.

The mother's marital status when she gave birth to her first child continued to be correlated with poverty throughout her child-rearing years. Approximately one out of every four mothers who were single when their first child was born were living in poverty at both the time of the 10 and 20-year data collections.

Poverty Rates By Marital Status of Mothers When Their First Child was Born in 1978

	Marital Status and Age When First Child was Born			
Poverty Rates	Single and 19 Years or Under	Single and Over 19	Married and 19 Years or Under	Married and Over 19
Living in Poverty when Child was 10 and 20	25%	24%	11%	2%
Living in Poverty when Child was Either 10 or 20 But Not Both	27%	19%	34%	17%
Not Living in Poverty when Child was Either 10 or 20	48%	57%	55%	81%
Total Unweighted N	(77)	(37)	(76)	(175)

Cramer's V = .26***

Even after 20 years, mothers who had been single and/or 19 years of age or younger when their first child was born, were still distinctly disadvantaged.

- 26 percent of mothers who had been single and 19 years of age or under when they had their first child were living in poverty when that child reached 20 years of age.

- 30 percent of mothers who had been single and over 19 years of age,
- 17 percent of mothers who had been married and 19 years of age or younger when their first child was born, and only
- 6 percent of mothers who had been married and over 19 years of age when they had their first child were living in poverty when that child reached 20 years of age (See Appendix Table 4).[12]

It is well known that the educational attainment of working-age adults in the household is highly correlated with family income (Human Resources Development Canada, 2000). Many households, especially those with low educational qualifications, require two salaries to maintain their families at a standard of living above the poverty line (Lochhead and Scott, 2000: vi). Findings from the FMP are consistent with other research that has demonstrated a strong link between women's educational attainment and their probability of experiencing poverty, particularly persistent poverty (Human Resources Development Canada, 2000; Ross et al, 2000: 70; Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 18, 41; National Council of Welfare, 1999a: 46). The World Development Bank has identified mothers' education as a key to reducing inter-generational poverty internationally (2001: 119).

Poverty Rates By Mother's Educational Attainment When First Child was Born

	Mother's Educational Attainment When First Child was Born		
Poverty Status	Grade 9 or Less	Grade 10 or 11	Grade 12 or More
Living in Poverty When Child was 10 and 20	34%	5%	2%
Living in Poverty When Child was Either 10 or 20 But Not Both	28%	23%	16%
Not Living in Poverty When Child was Either 10 or 20	38%	72%	82%
Total Unweighted N	(64)	(116)	(163)

Somers' d = .23***[13]

Sixty-two percent of women who assumed the responsibilities of motherhood when they had only Grade 9 or less education were living in poverty either at the time of the 10 or 20-year data collections for the FMP. Thirty-four percent of mothers who had Grade 9 or less when their first child was born were living in poverty both when their child was 10 and 20 years of age.

While the correlation between mother's educational attainment and poverty status holds for both one and two-parent families, it is much weaker for two-parent (Somers' d = .10*) than one-parent families (Somers' d = .29**)[14] (See Appendix Table 5). In two-parent families the husband's income can act as a buffer between the mother's low human capital and the family's financial standing. Conversely, the mother's educational attainment is particularly important to the financial well-being of lone-parent families. Among mothers who had ever been lone parents, 42 percent of those who started parenting with Grade 9 or less were living below the poverty line at both the 10 and 20-year data collection. Only 6 percent of the lone mothers who started parenting with Grade 12 or higher education were living in poverty at both the 10 and 20-year data collections.

Poverty, and particularly persistent poverty, creates negative outcomes for families. Results from the FMP indicate that persistent poverty is particularly prevalent in lone-parent families where mothers started child rearing with very low levels of education. Whereas only 15 percent of the mothers in the FMP started parenting with Grade 9 or less education, 65 percent of those mothers who experienced persistent poverty were drawn from this group of low-educated women.

Social-Assistance Usage by Mothers

Given the high rate of poverty among lone-parent families, it is not surprising these families were more likely than two-parent families to require social assistance. Within the current economic context it is difficult for families, particularly those with lower levels of education, to provide for their children without two incomes. Consequently, the majority of lone-parent families are living in poverty. The economic disadvantage of lone parents is further exacerbated by the fact that women with low levels of education are more likely to become lone parents. The

necessity for these families to rely on the mother as the primary wage earner greatly enhances their probability of requiring public income support.

- 54 percent of mothers who were lone parents, as compared to only
- 7 percent of mothers who were continuously married, required social assistance at some time while they were raising their children (See Appendix Table 6).

These findings are consistent with statistics provided by Status of Women Canada that showed 42 percent of lone-parent mothers and 9 percent of mothers who were married or living common law in 1994, received social assistance in that year (Scott, 1998: 19).

Because family structure is so strongly correlated with the probability of requiring social assistance, 85 percent of mothers in the FMP who had required social assistance at some time while they were raising their children had been lone parents at some point.[15] Cross-sectional data provided by the National Council of Welfare for 1997 indicated that there were 388,426 lone-parent families and 157,675 couples with children on social-assistance files (1998: 9). Thus, lone parents constituted approximately 71 percent of the families with children who were receiving social assistance across Canada at that time. Some of the difference between the 71 percent reported by the National Council of Welfare and the 85 percent reported by the FMP relates to the longitudinal nature of the FMP data with only those having been married for 20 years being in the married group. Comparisons between Nova Scotia and Canadian statistics also suggest that lone parents constitute a larger percentage of social-assistance clients in Nova Scotia than in other parts of the country.[16]

Single lone parents are more likely than divorced lone parents to require social assistance.

The introduction to this report outlined some significant changes in the demographic composition of lone-parent families. While divorce rates are leveling off, births to unmarried mothers are continuing to climb. The proportion of lone parents in general and, particularly, the proportion of

lone-parent social-assistance recipients, is shifting toward higher representations of single lone parents.

In 1978, when the FMP began, only approximately 16 percent of all births in Nova Scotia hospitals were to mothers who were not married (Nova Scotia Department of Health, 1978). Whereas these single mothers constituted only a small percentage of that cohort of children, they represented 41 percent of the families who subsequently required social assistance at some time while they were raising their children. Sixty-three percent of single lone parents in comparison to 48 percent of divorced lone parents required social assistance (See Appendix Table 7).

Even when child support is received, it does not necessarily prevent lone-parent families from requiring additional public income assistance.

Child support is often discussed as a means of reducing the social-assistance requirements of lone-parent families. Results presented in the earlier report on "The Dynamics of Family Life" indicated that 40 percent of lone-parent mothers never received child-support payments (Dechman, 2000a: 42). Furthermore, even those mothers who received regular child support often required public income support.

- 54 percent of lone-parent mothers who received regular child-support payments, and

- 65 percent of lone-parent mothers who did not receive regular child-support payments, required income assistance (See Appendix Table 8).

The payment of regular child support slightly reduces the probability that lone-parent mothers will require social assistance.[17] The educational and employment prospects of mothers and fathers are strongly correlated. Mothers who have the poorest employment prospects themselves are also the most likely to have partners with relatively weak labour-force attachments. Consequently, those lone mothers who are likely to require social assistance because of their own lack of employability are also likely to have ex-husbands whose earnings are insufficient to pay the amount of child support necessary to support the family without requiring income assistance.

How does human capital relate to the income assistance requirements of lone parents?

Low levels of education and work experience have been linked to high levels of social-assistance usage (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 1999: 53-54; Kapsalis, 1998; Cleveland and Hyatt, 1996: 19; Manlove, 1997: 20-21). Mothers who have less human capital are more likely to become lone parents and are less likely to be able to support their families without a partner's earnings.

Results for the FMP show that mothers who started parenting with low levels of education and who were lone parents at some time were unlikely to be able to support themselves and their children without public income support.

- 84 percent of mothers who started parenting with Grade 9 or less education and were lone parents at some time while they were raising their children, required social assistance.

- 60 percent of mothers who started parenting with Grade 10 or 11 and were lone parents at some time while they were raising their children, required social assistance.

- 30 percent of mothers who completed Grade 12 before having a child and were lone parents at some time while they were raising their children, required social assistance (See Appendix Table 9).

Among lone parents, social-assistance requirements were also linked to relatively weak labour-force attachments.

- 88 percent of the lone mothers who had 5 or fewer years of work experience required social assistance at some time.

- 86 percent of the lone mothers who had over 5 up to 10 years work experience required social assistance at some time.

- 54 percent of lone mothers who had over 10 up to 15 years of work experience required social assistance at some time.

- 29 percent of lone mothers who had over 15 years of work experience required social assistance at some time (See Appendix Table 10).

The correlation between labour-force attachment and social-assistance usage is difficult to interpret in a strict sense because it does not indicate whether employment was before, during, or after receipt of social assistance. However, the strong correlation between the mothers work-force attachment before her first child was born and subsequent social-assistance usage does demonstrate that early labour-force attachment is influential in determining the probability of mothers requiring social assistance (See Appendix Table 11).

Among lone mothers, those with traditional views about mothers not working outside the home were more likely to require social assistance.

International researchers have discussed the connection between mothers' work attitudes and the experience of unemployment and poverty (Pedersen, et al, 2000: 176-197; Gallie, 2000: 109-146). Results from the FMP show that the probability of requiring social assistance is linked to traditional views of mothering. Among mothers who were lone parents at some time while they were raising their children:

- 67 percent of those who completely agreed that mothers should not work outside the home when they started parenting,

- 58 percent of those who mostly agreed that mothers should not work outside the home,

- 45 percent of those who had mixed views, and

- 43 percent of mothers who felt it was okay for mothers to work outside the home, subsequently required social assistance (See Appendix Table 12).

When mothers require social assistance it is not because they do not want to work but rather because they lack access to employment that would enable them to provide for themselves and their children.

While conservative views of parenting are related to social-assistance usage, this is not a direct relationship. Mothers are unlikely to choose to stay out of the labour force when they are lone parents because of the financial implications of such a decision. However, conservative views of the care-giving/employment mix tend to lead to comparatively weak labour-force attachments, which in turn make mothers more susceptible to requiring social assistance, if they are lone parents. The discussion in the previous report on mothers' employment showed that mothers who divorced during the time they were raising their children were the most likely to adopt more liberal views of the employment/care-giving mix.

If one controls for education and experience, attitudes toward employment do not retain any significant effect on the probability of requiring social assistance. While attitudes about employment may weaken labour-force attachment (r = .14***), it is the lack of human capital, rather than attitudes, that has the most bearing on social-assistance requirements.

Binary logistic regression analysis for social-assistance usage by lone mothers' initial attitudes about employment, their total educational attainment, and amount of work experience

	B	S.E.	Ward	Sig.	R	Exp(B)
Opinions About Mothers Employment When First Child was Born	-.16	.1186	1.807	NS	0	.8526
Total Number of Years of Education	-.25	.0655	14.648	.0001	-.17	.7782
Number of Months of Employment	-.01	.0025	59.071	.0001	-.36	.9813

Total Unweighted N = 268[18]

Human capital has little effect on the probability of married mothers requiring social assistance?

While the mother's educational attainment is slightly correlated with the probably of continuously-married mothers requiring social assistance (Somer's d = .09**), neither work experience (Somer's d = .05) nor attitudes about employment (Somer's d = .03) have any effect. Human-capital variables have less effect on the probability of requiring social assistance among continuously-married mothers because their financial stability is determined, to a large extent, by their husband's employment patterns. It is possible for continuously-married mothers to follow the traditional role of full-time mother and housewife and not require social assistance as long as their husbands are employed in relatively well-paying jobs.[19] Education may be the most significant factor for married mothers not only because it increases their own earning potential, but also because mothers with higher levels of education are likely to have husbands with comparatively high earning potential. Such an association does not always follow for work experience. It is not uncommon for mothers with comparatively lengthy work histories to have husbands with weak labour-force attachments.

The characteristics that predispose certain mothers to require social assistance are the characteristics that also reduce their employment prospects.

The very forces that determine which mothers will require social assistance are those forces that make it particularly difficult for social-assistance clients to re-enter the labour force. Mothers who require social assistance tend to have comparatively low levels of education and little work experience.

Three-quarters of the mothers who required social assistance had not completed Grade 12 before their first child was born and one-third had not even completed Grade 10 .[20] Despite efforts at upgrading and skills training, half of the mothers who had received social assistance at some time still had not completed Grade 12 when their first child reached 20 years of age.[21] The unique circumstances of mothers with very low levels of education may be linked to issues of basic literacy. A recent article by Kapasalis demonstrates that "at any given level of education, the literacy score of social-assistance

recipients is lower than that of non-social-assistance recipients" (1998: 18). Thus, mothers with low Grade levels could be expected to have even lower literacy equivalents. Furthermore, the National Council of Welfare reports that low educational attainment is particularly prevalent among social-assistance recipients in the Atlantic region (1998: 41).

Challenges to employability also extend to issues of work experience. Over half (54 percent) of the mothers who received social assistance had spent at least 10 of the 20 years covered by the FMP out of the labour force.[22]

What determines the length of time for which mothers require social assistance?

Because of the cross-sectional nature of most research, we tend to think about lone parenting and social-assistance usage as if they are fixed states. Families are categorized as being either lone-parent or two-parent. In reality, both lone parenting and social-assistance usage are dynamic. Few families are either lone-parent or in need of social assistance for the entire time they are raising their children. The more typical scenario is that families move in and out of two-parent and lone-parent family structures and on and off of social assistance.

Among lone parents who required social assistance at any time while they were raising their children,

- 18 percent received assistance for at least 10 of the 20 years covered by the FMP,
- 19 percent received assistance from 5 up to 10 years,
- 24 percent received assistance from 2 up to 5 years, and
- 39 percent received assistance for less than 2 years.[23]

Analyses from the Institute for Research on Public Policy using data from British Columbia and Quebec also showed that a relatively small proportion of social-assistance clients in these provinces remained on assistance for

extended periods of time (Lacroix, 1997: 8). Data from the US corroborate these findings with only a minority of teenage and/or single mothers relying on social assistance continuously (Hall et al, 1996: 8; Seitz, 1996: 271; Harris, 1996 : 407). Researchers often focus on long-term social-assistance recipients not because they constitute a majority of cases but because this minority of clients consumes a major portion of social-assistance expenditures (Hall et al, 1996: 8; Seitz, 1996: 271; Harris, 1996: 407).

There were insufficient cases of married mothers receiving social assistance to provide an accurate estimate of these mothers' duration of usage.[24] However, it was clear that not only were married mothers less likely to require social assistance but those who did receive assistance were in need for comparatively short periods of time.

Among social-assistance recipients, duration of lone parenting, employment experience, educational attainment, and attitudes pertaining to the employment/care-giving mix were all significantly correlated with the length of time for which mothers received benefits.

Variable Correlated with Length of Social-Assistance Usage	r[25]
Attitude about Mothers Being Employed	-.16**[26]
Total Number of Years of Education	-.29***
Total Number of Years in the Workforce	-.42***
Total Number of Years of Lone Parenting	.75***[27]

The results of a multiple regression demonstrate that number of years of lone parenting is the factor most strongly associated with duration of social-assistance usage.

Multiple Regression with Years of Social-Assistance Usage for Those Who had Ever Required Assistance

Independent Variables	*Beta*
Attitude about Mothers Being Employed	-.04
Total Number of Years of Education	-.13**
Total Number of Years in the Workforce	-.30***
Total Number of Years of Lone Parenting	.69***

R^2 = .69 Unweighted N = 121.[28]

It is not surprising that duration of lone parenthood is so strongly correlated with duration of social-assistance usage, given what has been demonstrated about the characteristics of mothers who require social assistance. The lack of human capital among mothers who require social assistance makes it very difficult for them to provide for themselves and their children without another employed adult in the household (Miller,1990: 39; Harris, 1996: 424; Baker and Tippin, 1999: 63; Hick, 2000). Other US and Canadian studies also have identified changes in family structure as a major contributor to the movement of families in and out of poverty and on and off of social assistance (Miller, 1990: 152; Picot, Zyblock, and Pyper, 1999; Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 25, 26, 41; Lemaître, 1993: 2; Harris, 1997: 25; Laroche, 1998: 24; Baker and Tippin, 1999: 63).

While the duration of lone parenting is a major indicator of the duration of social-assistance usage, both education and labour-force attachment have significant independent effects. Social assistance and employment are not mutually exclusive. It is not uncommon for mothers who are receiving social assistance to be employed, they just have very low earnings. Social-assistance recipients who maintain some attachment to the labour force are likely to require social assistance for shorter periods of time. The independent effect of mother's educational attainment on duration of social assistance attests to the fact that better educated mothers have more chance of being able to support their families even if they have been out of the labour force for periods of time. Other research also has reported a correlation between educational attainment and length of social-assistance usage (Lacroix, 1997: 14; Harris, 1997: 56).

Researchers in both the US and Canada have documented a connection between low educational attainment and employment in the marginal sector of the workforce (Robichaud, 1996: 72; Muszynski, 1995: 195; Harris, 1997: 125). Even when social-assistance recipients find work, they tend to be employed in low-paid, part-time, and/or unstable jobs that make them particularly vulnerable to labour-market fluctuations, exploitation, and health problems, which, in turn, are likely to return them to social assistance (Armitage, 1996: 38; Edin and Lein, 1997a: 69; Harris, 1997: 125).

The earlier report from the FMP on mothers' employment demonstrated that women with low levels of education typically were employed in the marginal sector (Dechman, 2001b). Mothers who required income assistance at some point while they were raising their children were more likely to have been employed in sales, service, labour, and/or child-care jobs. Mothers who had never required income assistance were more likely to have been employed in secretarial, clerical, business, or professional jobs.

Social-assistance recipients were more likely than other mothers to have left jobs because of layoffs, temporary employment, harassment, and/or health restrictions. As mentioned in the previous report on mothers' employment, many health problems were related to the physical demands of the types of jobs held by these mothers. Layoffs and temporary employment also were common in the marginal sector of the labour market. For example, a number of the women who required social assistance had been employed in fish plants.

While human-capital investments can affect the ability of mothers to sustain their families without the need for public income support, mothers' attitudes about employment have no effect on duration of social-assistance usage, independent of their connection to the accumulation of human capital. It is the mother's inability to earn a living wage for her family, rather than her opinions about employment outside the home, that most determines the duration of social assistance.

Harris indicates that it is usually the combination of higher human capital and marriage that keeps families from returning to social assistance (1996: 423).

> In the long run, the exit route is less important than are the events that occur following welfare exit, and my results indicate that work or marriage alone is not sufficient to maintain welfare independence. Women who exit through marriage often enter the labour force to reinforce their economic security. Many women who exit through work eventually marry or enter into a cohabiting relationship, which can positively affect their family income more than their own earnings (Harris, 1996: 423-424).[29]

Did social-assistance recipients try to increase their human capital?

Contrary to the common public perception that social-assistance recipients do little to help themselves,

- 77 percent of mothers who had received social assistance at some time, as compared to

- 58 percent of mothers who never received social assistance, took some type of training after their first child was born (Appendix Table 13).

This finding is consistent with Gorlick and Pomfret's research in Ontario that demonstrated single parents on social assistance frequently pursued additional education and training (1993: 270).

While social-assistance recipients generally started parenting with lower levels of education than mothers who never had received social assistance, these differences in educational attainment did not account for differences in the probability of women who received social assistance taking additional education after they had children.

- Among mothers who started parenting with Grade 9 or less, 70 percent of those who received social assistance and 43 percent of those who did not receive social assistance took additional training.

- Among mothers who started parenting with Grade 10 or 11, 80 percent of those who received social assistance and 53 percent of those who did not receive social assistance took additional training.

- Among mothers who started parenting with Grade 12 or more, 87 percent of those who received social assistance and 62 percent of those who did not receive social assistance took additional training (See Appendix Table 14).

Generally speaking, mothers who start parenting with very low levels of education are the least likely to pursue additional studies. However, at all levels of educational attainment, mothers who required social assistance at some time were more likely to attempt to upgrade their skills.

The earlier report from the FMP on mothers' education showed that lone-parent mothers were more likely to take additional training than were continuously-married mothers (Dechman, 2000b). Results from the FMP indicate that mothers who were lone parents and/or social-assistance recipients were likely to take additional training. This would indicate the pursuit of additional educational credentials is probably related to the necessity of the mother assuming a significant role in the financial support of her family.

- 79 percent of lone-parent mothers who received social assistance took additional training,

- 72 percent of lone-parent mothers who never received social assistance took additional training,

- 71 percent of continuously-married mothers who received social assistance took additional training, and

- 53 percent of continuously-married mothers who never received social assistance took additional training (See Appendix Table 15).

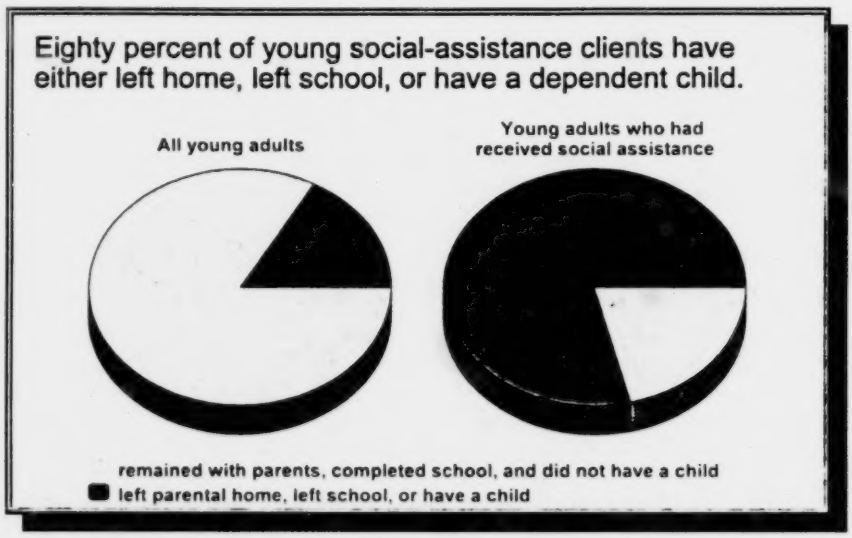
Social-Assistance Usage by Young Adults

By the time the young adults in this study reached 20 years of age, 7 percent had personally received social assistance at some time[30] and 4 percent were receiving social assistance at the time of the interview.[31] There are currently 668 20-year-

olds receiving social assistance in Nova Scotia and there were approximately 12,605 20-year-olds in the Nova Scotia population at the time of the 1996 census. Thus, approximately 5 percent of 20-year-olds in Nova Scotia are receiving social assistance, reinforcing the validity of the FMP estimates.

There were three primary factors that determined whether or not young adults required social assistance:

- having left home before 18 years of age,
- having left school before completing Grade 12, and/or
- having a dependent child.


Eighty percent of young social-assistance clients have either left home, left school, or have a dependent child.
All young adults
Young adults who had received social assistance
remained with parents, completed school, and did not have a child
left parental home, left school, or have a child

While only 17 percent of youth in general had either left home, left school, or had a child, 79 percent of the young adults who ever required social assistance fit at least one of these three characteristics.[32]

Young adults who leave school before completing Grade 12 are more likely to require social assistance.

- 30 percent of young people who left the school system before completing Grade 12 and never returned required social assistance at some time before they reached 20 years of age.

- 19 percent of young people who left the school system but completed Grade 12 or were still attending school required social assistance.

- 11 percent of young people who completed Grade 12 without interruption but had not pursued any post-secondary training required social assistance, and

- 2 percent of young people who had completed Grade 12 and had pursued some type of post-secondary training required social assistance (See Appendix Table 16).

These findings are consistent with data from the US that show "dropouts are seven and a half times as likely as graduates to be dependent on welfare" (Schorr, 1988: 8). Because of this filtering effect, the educational profiles of young social-assistance recipients look strikingly different than the educational profiles of the general youth population. Whereas only approximately 14 percent of 20-year-olds in general had left the school system before completing Grade 12, 60 percent of the 20-year-olds who required income assistance had left the school system before completing Grade 12.

Young adults who become separated from their parental home before 18 years of age are more likely to require social assistance.

- Almost 1 in every 2 (43 percent) young people who left their family home before they were 18 years of age required income assistance.

- Only 3 in 100 young people who were able to remain with their families until they were at least 18 years of age required income assistance (See Appendix Table 17).

There were a number of different reasons why young people did not remain with their families: some ran away, some were kicked out, some were taken into foster care, some moved in with friends or a partner, and some lived on the streets. Whereas only approximately 6 percent of all youth left home before 18 years of age, almost half (48 percent) of the young adults who had received social assistance had left home at an early age.[33]

Teen parents have a high probability of requiring social assistance.

- 1 in every 2 young people (56 percent) who had a dependent child required social assistance before they were 20 years of age.

- Only 3 in 100 young people who did not have a dependent child required social assistance before they were 20 years of age (See Appendix Table 18).

Because the presence of dependent children has a major impact on the need and qualification for public financial support, young income-assistance recipients look substantially different than the general population of youth. Only 5 percent of 20-year-olds had a child; however, half (51 percent) of the 20-year-olds who had ever personally required social assistance had a dependent child.[34]

Many of the young people who required social assistance fit not just one but two or more of these characteristics. Young adults who had children were more likely to have left home before 18 years of age (Phi = .39***) and to have left school before completing Grade 12 (Phi = .32***). Young adults who had left home at an early age were more likely to have left school before completing Grade 12 (Phi = .35***).[35] Adding any of the three predisposition characteristics of early home leaving, early school leaving, and early child bearing compounds the odds of a young person requiring social assistance. (See Appendix Table 19)

It is very uncommon for young people to have left their parental home, left school, and had a child. However, because those who fit all three of these characteristics have such an extraordinarily high probability of receiving social assistance, they constitute a disproportionately large segment of young social-assistance recipients. While only 1 percent of youth had left home, left school, and had a dependent child, 30 percent of the youth who required social assistance fit all three of these characteristics.[36] These data demonstrate that young social-assistance recipients are drawn from a small but distinctly disadvantaged segment of the population.[37]

Most young social-assistance recipients are women.

There were significant gender differences in the receipt of social assistance. Among the 20-year-olds in the FMP, young women were twice as likely as young men to have received income assistance. Eight percent of young women and 4 percent of young men had personally received social assistance before they reached 20 years of age.[38] Seventy-eight percent of the 20-year-olds who were receiving social assistance at the time of the 1999 interview were women.[39] These figures coincide with Nova Scotia Community Services statistics for this age cohort. Seventy-six percent of social-assistance clients from the 1978/79 cohort were females.

Lone parenting is the primary factor underlying gender differences in the need for social assistance. Among those 20-year-olds who did not have dependent children, young women were no more likely than young men to have received social assistance.

- 3 percent of young women who did not have a dependent child, and
- 4 percent of young men who did not have a dependent child had personally received social assistance at some time before they were 20.

Among those 20-year-olds who had dependent children, young mothers were more likely to require social assistance than were young fathers.

- 25 percent of young men who had a dependent child, and
- 65 percent of young women who had a dependent child, had received social assistance at some time (See Appendix Table 20).

These gender differences among young parents occurred primarily because young fathers were more likely to be married, living common law, or to have no contact with their children; whereas, young mothers were more likely to be lone parents.[40]

Why is early child bearing correlated with early school leaving and early departure from the parental home?

Do young women drop out of school because of pregnancy or become pregnant because they drop out of school? Not only has US research already clearly documented the connection between problems at home and/or problems at school and teen pregnancy, but there is also evidence that academic and family problems are usually precursors to, rather than consequences of, teen pregnancy (Moore and Sugland, 1999: 40-41).

> The characteristics that women in this age group bring to motherhood are often treated as if they were consequences of early motherhood, when in fact, they predate it.... Many young women have already had problems with schooling, they lack qualifications and are economically impoverished in comparison with their peers (Phoenix, 1991: 89-90).

US researchers report that many of the young women who become teen mothers had left the school system before becoming pregnant and even those who had not left the school system were usually struggling (Phoenix, 1991: 89-90; Upchurch and McCarthy, 1990: 232). Young women who become teen mothers typically have lower levels of school involvement, early school failures, behavioural problems, diminished opportunities, and/or little expectation of pursuing post-secondary education (United States General Accounting Office, 1998: 16; Abrahamse, Morrison, and Waite, 1988: 2 and 50; Caragata, 1999: 107; Seitz, 1996: 274; Upchurch and McCarthy, 1990: 232; Kelly, 1999: 59; Manlove, 1998: 191, 192, and 211; Miller, 1990: 43; Moore and Sugland, 1999: 40; Klerman, 1996: 201).

More recent US research has shifted from discussing teen pregnancy to discussing school-age pregnancy.

> Although data are less often reported this way..., school-age pregnancy is of greater interest to most researchers concerned with early child bearing. If teenagers graduate from high school, are able to find steady employment, then decide to marry and

> begin a family, this is not an ominous social problem (Seitz, 1996: 269).

Even though it is seldom explicit in the US literature, comments such as those made by Seitz indicate that low educational attainment, and employability are really more important than the age at which a mother has her first child. Earlier information about the mothers in the FMP demonstrated that whether a woman had a child when she is 17 or 25, if she had not acquired educational credentials before assuming the responsibilities of motherhood, her future prospects were limited (Dechman, 2000b; Dechman 2001b). While the negative outcomes for mothers in this study were primarily felt by those with Grade 9 or less, the escalating demand for secondary school completion in today's labour market means that the daughters who have completed Grade 10 or Grade 11 may also face increasing pressure.

In Canada, young women are much more likely to complete Grade 12 today than they were 20 years ago when the FMP project began (Normand, 2000: 85-86; Clark, 2000: 3 - 7; Lochhead, 2000: 42). Almost half of the original mothers involved in this study in 1978 had not completed Grade 12 before their first child was born. Only 11 percent of their daughters left the school system before completing Grade 12.[41]

Even though there have been major gains in the overall probability of secondary school completion, the correlation between educational attainment and teen parenting that was evident for the mothers was mirrored for the daughters. The earlier report on *Educational Profiles of Mothers* showed that approximately three-quarters of the mothers who had not completed Grade 12 before assuming the responsibilities of parenting in 1978 had left the school system before they became pregnant with their first child (Dechman, 2000b). Thus, pregnancy could only have been the precipitating factor for early departure from the school system in at most 1 out of 4 cases. This same trend was true of the 20-year-old daughters. Twenty-three percent of the daughters who left the school system before completing Grade 12 cited pregnancy or children as the reason.[42] Results from a national study of school leavers conducted by Statistics Canada indicate that this percentage is probably higher, rather than lower, than the national average. Only 9

percent of the young women who were involved in the nation-wide school-leavers survey had left school because of pregnancy, marriage or children (Statistics Canada, 1991: 2).

Census figures for Nova Scotia show that, among women 20 to 24 years of age, 44 percent of those who had not completed high school and had no other trade certificate had a dependent child (Statistics Canada, 1996b).[43] The FMP data also indicated that 44 percent of the young women who left the school system, as compared to only 4 percent of the young women who completed Grade 12 without interruption, had a dependent child by the time they reached their early twenties (Phi = .47***).[44] In the Statistics Canada School Leaver Survey, 27 percent of the young women ages 18 through 20 who left school before completing Grade 12 had a child (1997c: 11). Only 9 percent of these young women cited pregnancy as the reason for leaving school (Statistics Canada, 1991: 2). Therefore, approximately two-thirds of the young mothers who had not completed high school had left the school system for some reason unrelated to the pregnancy.

Qualitative comparisons of the lives of the young mothers in the FMP who left school because of pregnancy and those who left school for other reasons yielded similar results.[45] Whether pregnancy, or some other event, was the final factor mentioned as contributing to early school leaving, these young mothers' lives leading up to their pregnancy and departure from the school system were characterized other problems, such as:

- sexual assault by an adult or another teenager,
- physical violence in the home and/or in the school,
- a traumatic event such as suicide or death of a close friend or family member,
- special education, learning disabilities, or repeating Grades.

For those who think the experiences of violence are overstated, it is important to note that the questionnaire for the FMP did not explicitly ask about issues of violence. The life experiences reported by these young women were revealed throughout the course of more general questioning about their experiences in school, their self concept, etc. Canadian literacy researchers also have highlighted the link between violence or abuse and poor educational outcomes (Smith, 1999 : 5). All in all, the young mothers who left

school before completing Grade 12 lived lives that made them vulnerable to violence and insecurity.[46]

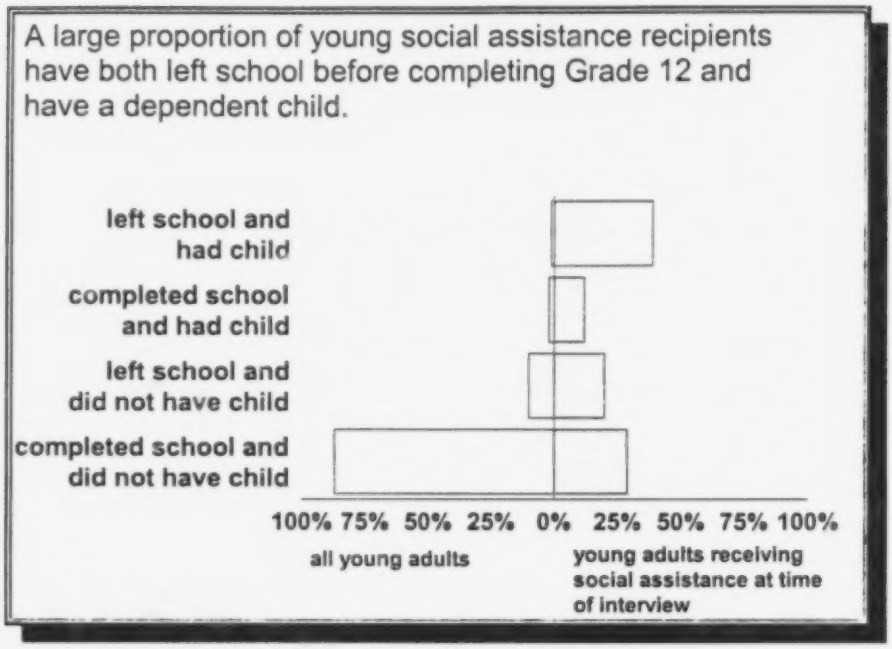
This discussion is not meant to imply that teen pregnancy is never the cause of early departure from the school system. However, becoming pregnant is so intertwined with other contextual factors that interventions must be far reaching. In most cases, teen pregnancy is not the one precipitating event that changes the educational life course of young women.[47] School-leaving is usually a process of disengagement with roots in the home, the school, and/or the community, rather than a reaction to one isolated event, such as pregnancy. In her report for Alberta, Tanner does not even distinguish pregnancy as a separate reason for early school leaving (1990). She maintains that the message conveyed by young mothers is one of generalized discontent. Even when pregnancy is mentioned, it is combined with other issues that reflect an ongoing alienation from the school system. Detailed information on the factors underlying early home leaving, early school leaving, and early child bearing will be explored more fully in a later reports from the FMP.

What about the relationship between early home leaving and early child bearing?

Similar to the issue of whether teen pregnancy causes early school departure or the other way around, the question is whether young women leave home before or because of their pregnancy. In the FMP, it was more often the case that the young mothers had either moved out, run away, been kicked out, or been taken into foster care before they became pregnant, and much less often the case that pregnancy caused the early departure from their family home. While some of these young women left their parental home because of problems in the home, others left because there was no need to stay with their parents after they had left school. One of the main reasons young people remain with their parents is to enable them to complete their schooling. If youth have left school, they are sometimes able to afford alternative accommodations by pooling their earnings with friends.

Young mothers with low levels of education are likely to require social assistance.

Because both low educational attainment and dependent children predispose young people to require social assistance, and these two factors are inter-related, many young social-assistance recipients have both dependent children and low levels of education. Seventy percent of teen parents who left the school system before completing Grade 12 required social assistance at some time before they were 20.[48]


A large proportion of young social assistance recipients have both left school before completing Grade 12 and have a dependent child.
left school and had child
completed school and had child
left school and did not have child
completed school and did not have child
100% 75% 50% 25% 0% 25% 50% 75% 100%
all young adults
young adults receiving social assistance at time of interview

This graph demonstrates the striking differences between young social-assistance recipients and the general youth population. Eight out of 10 of the 20-year old youth in the FMP had completed Grade 12 and did not have a child. Forty percent of the young people who were receiving social assistance at the time of the 1999 interview had both left the school system and had a dependent child. These findings are reinforced by data from the Census and Nova Scotia social-assistance records. Results from the Census demonstrate that within the 20 to 24 age group in 1996, 71 percent had both completed Grade 12 and did not have a dependent child. Among Nova Scotia social-assistance clients age 20 to 24 in 2001, 44 percent had not completed Grade 12 and had a dependent child.[49]

What do young parents have to say?

Many people believe young mothers resent their children for having disrupted their lives and essentially ruined their chances of achieving a 'good' life. However, the young women in the FMP who had children before they reached 20 years of age were not a random set of young women who became pregnant in their teens, dropped out of school because of the pregnancy, and had their educational paths permanently altered because they were young mothers. Rather, they were likely to have experienced difficulties in their homes and/or in the school system before they ever became pregnant. Contrary to resenting their children for having 'ruined' their lives, these young women were more likely to see their children as the center of their lives.

This finding is not unique to the FMP. Other researchers have come to similar conclusions (Kaufman, 1999: 30). Caragata (1999: 108) states that "while teen pregnancy may be unplanned, it is not necessarily unwanted, and having a baby may well satisfy a need for some young women who then choose to parent". Studies from the US have found that "whereas middle-class women indicated they had to achieve maturity before having a child, working-class women's accounts suggest that many of them saw themselves as achieving maturity through having a child" (McMahon, 1995: 91). "Many of the working-class women presented themselves as having 'always wanted' children... In many ways their accounts suggested they were waiting to claim the identity of mother" (McMahon, 1995: 103). Ontario research on teenage mothers also indicates that "many young mothers remember taking considerable pride in their new parenting role. They remember being encouraged and rewarded for the quality of care and nurturing relationship they developed with their child" (Sorenson et al, 1999: 18). McMahon reports from her US research that "in their motherhood motives, unwed mothers were not deviant but had exaggeratedly typical traditional motherhood images" (McMahon, 1995: 112; Murphey and Braner, 2000: 722).[50]

Contrary to the view that teen parents are likely to be hostile to their children for having restricted their life chances, the young parents interviewed for the FMP expressed great concern for, and commitment to, their children. Rather

than resentment, these young parents usually saw their children as the most important part of their lives. Interview questions related to the formation of self concept demonstrated that child rearing formed the core of self identity for many young parents.

Most of the comments are from young mothers. The few comments from young fathers have been marked with an asterisk. In response to an open-ended question about when they felt most proud or good about themselves, young parents responded in the following ways:

- "when I had my son"
- "when my children laugh. I feel good when they're happy. I love being with them"
- "when I am with my sons"
- "when my daughter was born"*
- "when I had my baby"

In describing their best qualities, many focused on their relationships with their children:

- "my motherly instinct"
- "parenting, patience"
- "I'm a good mom"
- "taking care of my daughter"

When asked what they felt was most important for them to accomplish in life, young parents responded:

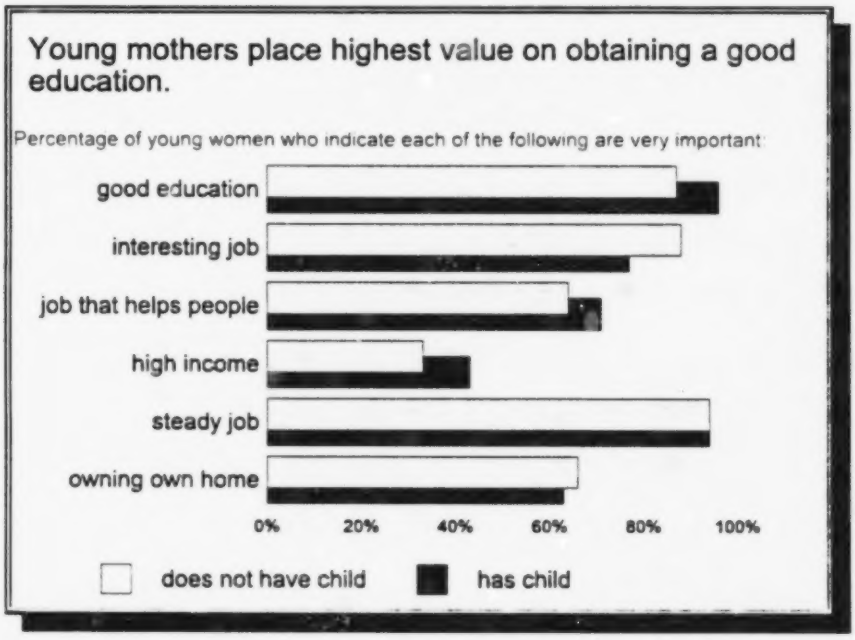
- "being a really good role model to my kids"

- "better my education, have a good job where I help others, raise my daughter, and just be stable"
- "have a good life, have a life really, and support my kid"*
- "to get off income assistance and get a good job to support me and my family"
- "ensuring that my daughter has a good life"*
- "raising my child in the best way I can"
- "being able to live life to its fullest without the worry of knowing where you're going to live from one day to the next"
- "My kids are my life. I want them to have a good life. That's what's most important."
- "I feel the most important thing is to raise my son in a good caring environment."
- "I want to make sure that my daughter has a good life."
- "I just want to bring up my children as best I can."
- "I want to get my Grade 12, have a good job, a place to live, and be able to support my family."
- "just to get a good job and take care of my son"
- "Providing for my family is most important."*
- "getting my own home and making a family with my girlfriend and son."*
- "to raise my children well and also to get a good job so it's possible to have a good lifestyle"

- "raising my son in the right way, to have a healthy home, and going back to school"
- "to settle down and have everything we need. I don't need to be rich."*
- "to finish my education so I can provide my son with a good life"
- "my family being healthy"

For most teenage parents, their children are the center of their lives. Most young parents want more than anything else to provide a 'good life' for their sons/daughters.

While young mothers are more likely than other young women to rate having children as very important, this does not mean these young women see their role as mother precluding educational and employment pursuits. As Tanner points out from her Alberta research, dropping out of school does not mean that young people disregard education as the route to "a better life" (1990). Rather than being an inhibitor, the presence of children is often a motivator for young mothers to upgrade their education so they can help their children achieve a better life than they themselves have had. Ninety-six percent of young mothers and 86 percent of young women without children rated education as very important (Somers' d = .11**).



Generally speaking, young mothers do not differ significantly from other young women with respect to their goals and priorities. Virtually all young women rated getting a steady job as very important, regardless of whether or not they had a child. Young mothers were slightly more likely than other young women to place a high degree of importance on income. This is not surprising, given the very high rates of poverty among young lone-parent families. When asked about the challenges of lone parenting, most young mothers focused first on financial difficulties. Young women who did not have children were slightly more likely to stress the importance of their work being interesting. Young women with children were slightly more likely to want work that would help other people. The attraction of young mothers to helping occupations is consistent with their high care-giving orientation.[51]

While the route to a better life is recognized as including better education and steady employment, these young parents clearly recognize their care-giving responsibilities as an obstacle both to pursuing higher education and to holding a job. When asked what made it difficult for them to get the education or training they wanted, young parents responded in the following ways:

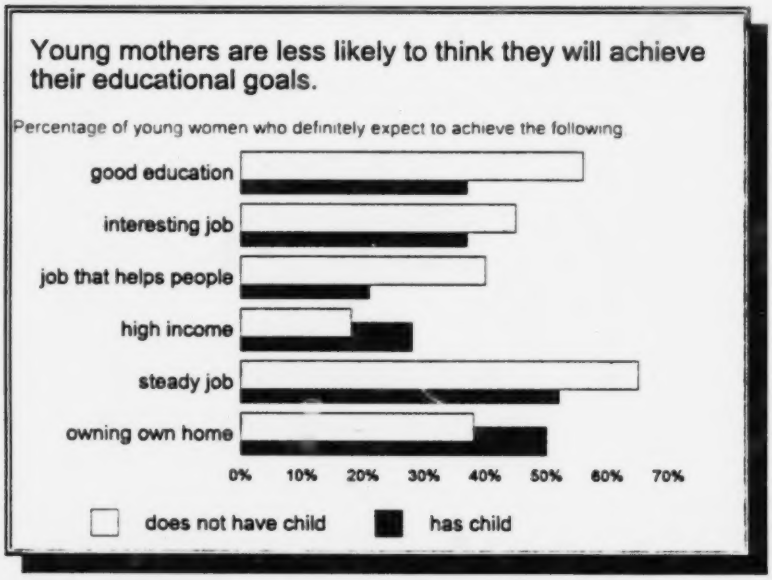
- "I have a 3 year old so I'm busy. It's hard to save the money for school."
- "I don't want to put my children in daycare."
- "My kids, I don't like to be away from them and time is a factor."

When asked about the main difficulty they experienced in getting employment, responses also focused on the needs of their children:

- "babysitting. I have a problem trusting people."
- "having children. I have three babies. I prefer to stay home with them."
- "family responsibilities."*
- "family responsibilities. I want to spend time with my daughter."
- "I would like to have a daycare so my children could be with me."

- I think that work is very difficult for the single parent, especially if you don't have a good education because everything you're going to make just goes out in babysitters."
- "being able to afford a babysitter"
- "trying to find a babysitter"
- "finding affordable babysitters for my children"
- "taking time off with my baby when he was sick"

Young men are less likely than young women to have assumed the responsibilities of parenting at an early age; however, young fathers expressed similar commitments to their children as did young mothers and they were cognizant of the restrictions care-giving responsibilities placed on their future education and employment options. The struggles of these young fathers are indicative of the poor economic prospects of young men in general. One 20-year-old father indicated that continuing his education was very important to him but then added "It's too late for me now".



Even though education is very important to young mothers, they are less likely than other young women to think they will achieve their goals in this area (Somers' d -.23**). Conversely, young mothers are slightly more likely than other young women to believe that they will achieve a desirable level of income. Some of the difference in income assessments between young mothers

and other young women may relate to different perceptions of what constitutes a desirable level of income. However, there are also indications from other research that young people who leave school, as many of the young mothers had, may differ from their peers who complete school on a more fundamental level. Early school leavers differ from their counterparts who complete school not on the basis of whether they believe higher educational attainment leads to higher income but rather on the belief that low education necessarily leads to low income (Steinberg, Dornbusch, & Brown, 1992: 726). This line of reasoning is reinforced by the fact that young mothers in the FMP also were slightly more likely than other young women to think they would own their own home. Thus, early school leaving and early child bearing may relate to whether education is perceived as a necessary or sufficient condition for attaining an adequate standard of living.

Is there evidence of inter-generational social-assistance requirements?

With the tightening of labour-market prospects for youth, many young people in all family circumstances are being forced to remain dependent on their parents for longer periods of time. Descriptions of the mothers' social-assistance patterns demonstrated that those who required assistance were likely to have weak labour-force attachments and to have been poor for relatively extended periods of time. Consequently, they were unlikely to be able to adequately support themselves even without the additional demands of financially supporting adult sons/daughters. Because the sons/daughters of social-assistance recipients often do not have the safety net of their parents' income to fall back on, they themselves are more likely to require assistance. Other researchers have also found inter-generational patterns of unemployment, poverty, and social-assistance usage (Eichler, 1988: 237).

Results from the FMP demonstrate that only a minority of the sons/daughters of mothers who received social assistance went on to require social assistance themselves at an early age. In families where the mother had received social assistance at some time, 80 percent of their sons/daughters did not require social assistance before they reached 20

years of age (See Appendix Table 21). However, the sons/daughters of families that had never received assistance were even less likely to require social assistance (98 percent). Consequently, three-quarters of young social-assistance clients were drawn from families that had previously required assistance.[52]

Because teen parenting is relatively rare, there are insufficient cases in the FMP to provide generalizable results within this group. However, the data does indicate that teen child bearing is probably a significant factor in understanding inter-generational social-assistance usage.

Correlation Between Mothers' and Son's/Daughter's Social-Assistance Usage Controlling for Teen Parenting

Son/Daughter has Dependent Child

Son's/Daughter's Social-Assistance Usage	Mother's Social-Assistance Usage: Never Received Social Assistance	Mother's Social-Assistance Usage: Received Social Assistance
Never Received Social Assistance	48%	40%
Received Social Assistance	52%	60%
Unweighted N	(12)	(25)

Phi = .11 NS

Son/Daughter does not have Dependent Child

Son's/Daughter's Social-Assistance Usage	Mother's Social-Assistance Usage: Never Received Social Assistance	Mother's Social-Assistance Usage: Received Social Assistance
Never Received Social Assistance	99.9%	85%
Received Social Assistance	.1%	15%
Unweighted N	(237)	(108)

Phi = .34***

If they did not become teen parents, 15 percent of youth in families that had received social assistance became social-assistance recipients themselves at an early age. Conversely, approximately half of the young people who became parents at an early age required social assistance, regardless of

whether or not their parents had ever required assistance.[53] Less than 1 percent of young adults whose parents had not required social assistance and who had not become teen parents received social assistance before the age of 20. The majority of young social-assistance clients who came from homes that have never required social assistance, had required social assistance themselves because they had a dependent child.

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, young people in families that have received social assistance are more susceptible to requiring assistance themselves. Nonetheless, both early departure from the parental home and early child bearing are significantly associated with the social assistance usage of youth, independent of the effects of the family environment. Early child bearing has the most pronounced impact on the odds of young people requiring social assistance before the age of 20.

Binary Logistic Regression of Young Adults' Social-Assistance Usage by Early Home Leaving, Early School Leaving, Early Child Bearing, and Mother's Social-Assistance Usage

	B	S.E.	Ward	Sig	R	Exp(B)
left parental home before 18	2.029	.4230	23.014	.0001	.22	7.6
left school before completing Grade 12	0.419	.4036	1.075	NS	0	1.5
had a child	3.229	.4909	43.252	.0001	.31	25.2
mother had received social assistance at some time	2.834	.4566	38.510	.0001	.29	17.0

Unweighted N = 356[54]

While low educational attainment is correlated with social-assistance usage, its effect is mostly indirect, mediated by the association with early home leaving and early child bearing.

Within families that have received social assistance, youth who leave home, leave school, and/or have a dependent child are much more likely to require social assistance than are youth who remain in their parental home, complete school, and do not have a child ($r = .49^{***}$)[55]. While these three

factors cannot completely over-ride the inter-generational effects of social-assistance usage, they provide some clear direction for improving the life opportunities of youth in poor families.

Summary of Key Points

Findings from the FMP illustrate some important points pertaining to the connection between family structure and social-assistance usage. The longitudinal nature of the FMP data makes it possible to provide a more comprehensive examination of the life experiences of both mothers and their sons/daughters.

- *In comparison with two-parent families, lone-parents are more likely to be poor and consequently are more likely to require social assistance.* Results from the FMP showed that over the course of the time they were raising their children, 54 percent of mothers who were lone parents at some time, and only 7 percent of mothers who were continuously married, required social assistance.

- *Among lone parents, those with low levels of education are particularly vulnerable to requiring public income support.* Eighty-four percent of lone-parent mothers who started parenting with Grade 9 or less, 60 percent of lone-parent mothers who started parenting with Grade 10 or 11, and 30 percent of lone parents who started parenting with Grade 12 or more, required social assistance at some time while they were raising their children.

- *While mothers with low levels of education are particularly likely to require social assistance, this does not mean they do not try to upgrade their qualifications.* Three quarters of social-assistance recipients took some type of upgrading or training after their first child was born.

- *A minority of lone parents remain on social assistance for the entire time they are raising their children.* Approximately 1 in 5 of the mothers in the FMP who required social assistance, received benefits for 10 or more of the 20 years covered by the project.

- *Family structure, educational attainment, and work experience are all significantly associated with the length of time mothers require social assistance.* These three factors explain much of the variance in the length of time for which social assistance is required.

- *While the majority of sons/daughters of social-assistance families did not require social assistance themselves at an early age, their probability of requiring benefits was still higher than in non-social-assistance families.* Eighty percent of the sons/daughters of mothers who had received assistance did not require assistance themselves. Ninety-eight percent of the sons/daughters of mothers who had not received social assistance did not require assistance themselves.

- *There are inter-generational patterns of social-assistance usage.* Three quarters of the sons/daughters who required social assistance before they were 20 years of age had come from families where their mothers had required social assistance at some time.

- *There are three main factors that influence the probability of young adults requiring social assistance: leaving their parental home before 18 years of age, leaving the school system before completing Grade 12, and having a child in their teens.* Eighty percent of young adults who required social assistance had either left home, left school, or had a dependent child.

- *The three characteristics of early home leaving, early school leaving, and early child bearing are also inter-related and young adults who fit all three of these characteristics are almost guaranteed to require social assistance.* While only 1 percent of the youth interviewed for the FMP had left home, left school, and had a dependent child, 30 percent of the young social-assistance recipients fit all three of these characteristics.

- *There are marked gender differences in social-assistance usage among youth.* The FMP results showed that young women were twice as likely as young men to require social assistance. These gender differences were attributable to the fact that young women were more likely to be lone-parents.

- *Because teen pregnancy is highly correlated with early departure from the school system, many young mothers have no educational credentials that would support them in obtaining employment.* However, young mothers value education as a means of improving both their own lives and the lives of their children.

Discussion

Welfare reform has become a major topic of concern throughout the US and Canada. This and many other reports have documented the strong correlation between family structure and social-assistance usage. Lone-parent families have high and prolonged rates of poverty and many require social assistance. Even though lone-parent families cannot be held responsible for recent increases in social-assistance caseloads, their high representation among social-assistance clients has brought them into the spotlight of reform initiatives.

There are a number of different approaches to reducing social-assistance expenditures, for example:

- reducing the number of new clients who need social assistance,
- reducing the length of time for which clients need social assistance, and/or
- reducing recidivism.

While some reforms proposed in the literature address one component of the expenditure equation, other reforms address other components of the expenditure equation. For example, tightening divorce laws, encouraging single mothers to marry, and reducing teen pregnancy are all aimed primarily at reducing the number of clients who need assistance. Employability initiatives aim to both reduce the length of time clients stay on social assistance and to reduce the probability of recidivism.

The following discussion reviews some approaches that have been proposed in the literature and draws upon data from the FMP and other sources to assess the impacts that could be anticipated from such reforms.

Divorce laws

Some people have suggested reducing the prevalence of lone parents on the social-assistance caseload by tightening divorce laws (Miller, 1990: 3; Allen, 1995: 263). They reason that if you reduce the number of divorces, you will reduce the number of lone

parents, thus reducing public expenditures for social assistance. While the liberalizing of divorce laws increased the number of lone-parent families and consequently their need for social assistance, single mothers are more likely than divorced mothers to require social assistance. Furthermore, education seems to be the underlying factor that determines the probability of requiring social assistance regardless of whether lone parents are single or divorced.

Child Support

New child support guidelines and family maintenance systems have been instituted to enhance the contributions of non-custodial parents. While these approaches can reduce the amount of social assistance required by individual clients, they are unlikely to significantly reduce the number of clients. Low-educated lone-parent mothers who are most likely to require social assistance are least likely to have partners who are in a position to pay enough child support to maintain the family without any additional public assistance.

Marriage and Teen Mothers

Unlike earlier times when teen mothers typically married, today the norm is for young mothers to remain single. Some argue that the answer to our current dilemma of escalating social-assistance costs is to reinstate social sanctions that would push young parents into marriage (Miller, 1990: 3; Wente, 1994). In this regard, it is important to bear in mind that most single mothers enter into marriages or common-law relationships on their own, without any intervention. Results from the FMP showed that for the 1978 cohort, 67 percent of single mothers had a partner before their child reached 5 years of age. Only 9 percent of mothers who had their first child in 1978 were single for the duration of their child-rearing years. However, the partnerships formed by single mothers tended to be comparatively unstable often returning them to lone parenthood and back to social assistance (Wu, 1996: 404; Harris, 1997: 133).

The increase in single teenage motherhood may be partially linked to the declining employment prospects of young men. It is not that these young women do not want to marry; rather, there are few young men who are in any better position to support a family than are the young mothers themselves.

Reducing Teen Child-bearing

The US provides a test case of the effect of social-assistance regulations on teen pregnancy. Despite efforts to control births to teen mothers through welfare sanctions, the US persists in having one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the world (Seitz, 1996: 268). Research has shown that major welfare reforms to tighten eligibility requirements in the US were not connected with declining rates of teen pregnancy (Moore and Sugland, 1999: 38; Merrick, 1995: 288; Roosa, 1986: 314). Jones reports "that countries with some of the highest welfare benefits, such as Sweden, have the lowest teen pregnancy rates" (Kelly, 1999: 57).

Attempts to reduce teen parenting through the denial of social-assistance benefits can put both mothers and their children at great risk of negative outcomes such as extreme poverty, exposure to violence, abuse, health problems, etc. The young women who become mothers and subsequently seek social assistance usually come from low-income families that are struggling to support themselves and therefore are unable to assume the additional financial demands of a baby. Relying on extended family for additional support also is complicated by the fact that many of these young women had already experienced conflicts with their families before they had a child.

Extensive evaluation research in the US has also shown that simply enhancing the provision of sex education and birth control information also does little or nothing to deter teen pregnancy and child bearing (Moore and Sugland, 1999: 41; Seitz, 1996: 279-280; Manlove, 1998: 207; Merrick, 1995: 297). Researchers are increasingly becoming aware that programming to address the rate of teen child bearing must be broader in nature, providing opportunities for educational and employment growth and development, the facilitation of negotiating and relationship skills, and strengthening parents and families in communicating with and supporting children through their teenage years (Moore and Sugland, 1999: 41; Klerman, 1996: 201).

There are two primary forces that precede early child bearing: the first is a narrowing of options and the second is the experience of social exclusion. US researchers have focused primarily on the narrowing of options. The core of this perspective is that children from marginalized groups need better educational and employment opportunities.

Results from the FMP and other Canadian data indicate that early child bearing is strongly associated with early school leaving. Retention in the school system and the creation of meaningful opportunities for both young women and young men are critical components of measures directed toward reducing teenage child bearing. In general, delayed family formation has resulted from increased years of schooling (Kaufman, 1999: 26). Young people live with their parents and delay having children so they can continue their education. What happens to youth who see little or no prospect of post-secondary education and who may even have given up on the idea of completing Grade 12? Many young women who have reduced educational prospects view motherhood as their most important role in life. The lives of their own mothers and other women in their communities, who also typically have low levels of education, bear testimony to the fact that their lives are probably not going to be much different 10 years from now than they are today. With low levels of education they are likely to work in service or sales jobs that offer few opportunities for advancement or income growth (Caragata, 1999: 107; Robichaud, 1996: 72). In total, they believe their primary role is to be a mother and they feel they are unlikely to be any better prepared to assume this role later in life than they are in their teens (Kelly, 1999: 60-62). On the basis of her research in the US, McMahon reports that "waiting for what the middle class women would define as readiness appeared neither realistic nor applicable to the working-class women" (1995: 100-101). In fact, many women who have children when they are comparatively young feel strongly that delayed child bearing is not a good thing (McMahon, 1995: 97).

If we are able to keep young women engaged in the educational process, they are likely to delay child bearing until later in life. Furthermore, it is evident from the FMP, and much of the other research, that it is early departure from the school system, rather than early child bearing *per se*, that has the most negative consequences for subsequent outcomes (Seitz, 1996; Dechman, 2001b). Whether a woman becomes a mother when she is 17 or 25, if she has low educational attainment there is a high probability she and her children will be poor, will require social assistance at some time, and will have many other associated negative life experiences.

While reduced options for education and employment pursuits influence early child bearing, the effects of social exclusion are more pervasive. Some of the

young women who became mothers at an early age had been struggling academically but many more had left the school system because of interpersonal problems either with peers, teachers, and/or parents.

Results from the FMP demonstrated that many young women who became teenage mothers had not only left the school system before completing Grade 12 but also left their parental home before they were 18 years of age. Why would young women who are the least likely to be able to financially support a child themselves, and who are the least likely to be in a position to count on their families for financial support, be the most likely to have a child in their teens? Youth have two main points of social connection: first to their families and second to peers, teachers, and the larger society through the school system. Teen child bearing is, to a large extent, an outcome of social exclusion from one or both of these spheres of life. When findings from the FMP were presented to Nova Scotia Department of Community Service's staff, one social worker aptly summed up the situation by saying she had had young mothers tell her that they had a baby because "they wanted someone to love and to love them in return".

While some young mothers perceive their educational and employment opportunities as essentially cut off by their motherhood role, many more young mothers are prepared to pursue educational and employment pursuits in conjunction with their child-rearing responsibilities. Young mothers are even more likely than other young women their age to say that education is very important. They see the enhancement of their educational credentials not only as a means of improving their own circumstances but also as a means of improving opportunities for their children.

Whether one focuses on social exclusion or reduced opportunities as the primary cause of teen child bearing does not change the direction of programming. Young women need support to help them remain engaged in the school system. However, the emphasis of such programming must be twofold. In addition to academic and skills training, these youth require social connection.

Many young people, and particularly young women who are struggling in the school system, are having problems not only in their classes but also in their relationships with peers, teachers, and/or family members. Even

programming that focuses on life skills as well as academic achievement is only successful in improving outcomes of youth in the short run (Eggert et. al., 1992). The effects of such programs diminish over time because one of the main achievements is not the program content but rather the connection of these youth with supportive encouraging adults. Once the connection with these adults is removed, positive outcomes tend to decline. Evaluations of programming for high-risk children indicate that few of these children reach a stage when they can go back into regular school programming. Skills training is grounded in the assumption that high-risk youth have come to their current situation because of some intellectual and/or inter-personal inadequacy. If, on the other hand, these young people have come to their current situation because of deficits in their social environment, then what is most needed is an avenue for providing a positive social connection.

When the world of theory makes the transition into the world of practice, it becomes evident that issues such as early home leaving, early school leaving, and early child bearing cannot be treated in isolation. Regardless of where it starts or where it ends, social exclusion in one sphere can lead to social exclusion in another sphere and can only be corrected by providing meaningful relationships with people who can support the youth's inclusion within a larger social context.

Youth who come to the position of needing support for inclusion are usually least able to draw on their parents because their parents themselves are often socially excluded. The most successful interventions are those that provide sustained support for children and youth, often in an alternative physical location that separates them from the school environment where they already have been ostracized (Dugger, 1998). Such alternative programming provides a context where young people are helped to develop a positive self concept and successful strategies for functioning within the larger society.

If early interventions are unsuccessful in keeping young women engaged in the school system, later interventions become increasingly difficult. For example, one obstacle to educational upgrading identified by young mothers in both the FMP and other research studies is a reluctance to leave their children with alternate caregivers (Aber, Brooks-Gunn, and Maynard, 1995: 61). Results from the FMP demonstrate that many teenage mothers have

experienced abuse and/or violence in their own lives so it is not surprising they are nervous about having other people care for their children.

Many young mothers, like other mothers, do not want to leave their children (Aber, Brooks-Gunn, and Maynard, 1995: 61; Edin and Lein, 1997a: 8), particularly during their infancy. Therefore, they seek training or instruction that they can undertake in their homes. As their children grow older, these young women are in a better position to attend community-based training programs, but their ability to do so may be hampered by a lack of confidence and/or previous negative educational or life experiences. Because young mothers usually have experienced problems in their home and/or in the school system, educational programs will be most successful if they are designed to address the special circumstances of this group. "The Teenage Parent Welfare Demonstration experiences [in the US] revealed that the problems faced by teenage parents vary widely, making tailored services necessary" (Aber, Brooks-Gunn, and Maynard, 1995: 53). Evaluators of the US experience have indicated that "imaginative programs that combined academics, work experience, and intensive personal attention seemed to work best at sparking [young parents'] interest and commitment. Schedule flexibility also was imperative to enable the teen mothers to deal with sick children, child care breakdowns, transportation problems, and other crises" (Aber, Brooks-Gunn, and Maynard, 1995: 53).

Young mothers have neither chosen to have an abortion nor rejected responsibility for their children. These are often young people for whom children are the centre, if not the totality, of their self identity and social connection. Results from the FMP, as well as other Canadian and US research, have shown that the majority of single mothers are motivated to upgrade their education in an effort to improve the lives of their children (Aber, Brooks-Gunn, and Maynard, 1995: 61). However, the relative success of training initiatives will depend on the degree to which such programs are responsive to the special needs of these young mothers. The US has documented positive outcomes from specialized educational programs for teenage mothers that offer small class sizes and personalized attention (Seitz, 1996: 274, 275, 283). The complex nature of the forces that precede teen child bearing means that programming for this group must be fundamentally different from standard school programming.

Employment Initiatives

Whereas the previously mentioned approaches to social-assistance reform aim primarily at reducing the number of clients, employment initiatives are usually directed at reducing the length of social-assistance spells and diminishing recidivism. The basic premise of such initiatives is that the way to reduce social-assistance expenditures and help families is to facilitate their reintegration into the labour market.

The first important point in relation to employability initiatives is that most lone parents who receive social assistance neither wish to remain on social assistance nor do remain on social assistance for the entire time they are raising their children (Baker and Tippin, 1999: 100; Miller, 1990: 56; Armitage, 1996: 38; Picot and Myles, 1995: 8; Gorlick, 1995: 287; Mead, 1996: 51; Edin and Lein, 1997b: 253-266; Bancroft and Vernon, 1996: 7, 15; Harris, 1997: 24). There is substantial evidence from the FMP, and other sources, that demonstrates the vast majority of lone-parent social-assistance recipients seek to upgrade their education and/or employment skills (Gorlick and Pomfret, 1993: 270).

While many social-assistance recipients may be motivated to seek employment, in the past, some social-assistance regulations have tended to create rather than remove barriers. Many people have commented on the structure of rules and regulations that have served to make situations for families worse, rather than better, when they move from social assistance into employment (Picot and Myles, 1995: 29; Torjman, 1998; Loewen, 1998). The loss of medical coverage, the existing tax structure, low minimum wages, and additional childcare expenses all can be significant obstacles when mothers attempt to support their families completely through their own earnings (Torjman, 1996: 18; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1999: 49; Baker and Tippin, 1999: 98). Results from the HRDC Self Sufficiency Projects demonstrate that supplementing the earnings of individuals who move from social assistance into the labour force has the potential to reduce the length of social-assistance spells even for some long-term social-assistance clients (Michalopoulos, et al., 2000). Thus, simply addressing the disincentives to moving off social assistance and enhancing the ability of clients to earn a living wage could be expected to reduce social-assistance expenditures.

Many social-assistance clients opt for employment when they are offered a reasonable plan that has the potential to improve rather than detract from the economic and social well-being of their family. Comments from participants in the Self Sufficiency Projects and other employment initiatives for social-assistance recipients demonstrate that work experiences are usually more positive than negative because earnings help their families escape the welfare stigma (Bancroft and Vernon, 1996: 15, 18). In countries like Canada where the social norm is increasingly moving in the direction of expecting all parents to be active members of the labour force, lone parents are motivated to find jobs because it is socially unacceptable to do otherwise (Bancroft and Vernon, 1996: 15). Countries such as Australia, that view mothering as a full-time job, have 90 percent of lone parents receiving social assistance (Baker and Tippin, 1999: 244).

Once regulations are redesigned to make employment a more viable option, those clients who continue to require assistance will be the least employable group (Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 46; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1999: 104). While the educational qualifications and employment skills of social-assistance recipients vary somewhat from one part of Canada to another; in general, people who require social assistance have comparatively low levels of education and employment skills (National Council of Welfare, 1998: 41).

While most people agree with the general goal of supporting social-assistance recipients to move into the labour force, there are those who suggest abandoning voluntary employability initiatives because of their dubious effectiveness (Beeby, 1998: A1; Mead, 1996: 66). Employability initiatives in the US have been criticized because they have tended to serve those who are likely to gain employment on their own, moved clients into unstable jobs in the marginal sector, and sometimes did little to reduce overall government expenditures (Miller, 1990: 64; Wente, 1994; Allen, 1995: 261; Lacroix, 1997: 17; Human Resources Development Canada, 1996: 39; Baker and Tippin, 1999: 4). Following a 'problem-centered' approach to social policy development, one seeks to identify 'the problem' and find 'the answer'. In this case, 'the problem' was identified as 'welfare dependency' and 'the answer' was identified as 'getting people back to work'. When the initial programs provided less than optimum results, critics were quick to suggest abandoning the whole idea (Beeby, 1998; Allen, 1995: 261).

The fundamental truth that underlies any social-assistance programming is that the clients are not a random set of the population. Instead, those who require social assistance come from a small, but distinctly disadvantaged, subset of the population. For example, FMP results show that while few mothers had Grade 9 or less education when they started parenting, approximately one third of mothers who required social assistance at some time while they were raising their children were drawn from this group. Similarly, less than 20 percent of youth had left home before age 18, left school before completing Grade 12, or had a child in their teens, but this group constituted 80 percent of the youth who required social assistance. This is why the simple 'problem identification and fixing' method of social policy development offers little hope of success. If we are looking for 'one answer' and there is no 'one answer' all we do is recycle through a process of problem identification, solution identification, realization that the solution does not work, throwing out the whole idea, and starting over. Furstenberg, one of the primary researchers of teen child bearing in the US, aptly entitled one of his articles "As the Pendulum Swings" because public opinion often swings from one extreme to another (1991: 127- 136). HRDC's examination of employability initiatives both in the US and in Canada concludes with the statement - "There does not appear to be a 'magical solution' to integrating social-assistance recipients into the labour force" (Human Resources Development Canada, 1996: 3 and 6).

If one reassesses the findings of employability initiatives based on a more thorough outcome analysis, it is clear some methods offer more potential for success than others (Friedlander and Burtless, 1994; Human Resources Development Canada, 1996). Whether the issue is child abuse, social assistance, literacy, poverty, or teen pregnancy, the answers are not straightforward. Those who have been involved in extensive research in any of these areas have come to similar conclusions - there is no 'one precipitating explanatory variable' and therefore no 'one answer' (Blanco, 1994: 7; Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 48; Cameron and Vanderwoerd, 1995: 2). There are, however, indications that a number of conditions may come together to enhance the probability of teen pregnancy, low educational attainment, poverty, and social-assistance usage. It is often fruitless to attempt to disentangle the exact contributions of each factor because they are so highly correlated (Wu, 1996: 405).[56]

If one abandons the quest for finding one simple answer and accepts that there are more likely to be a number of inter-related conditions that precipitate any of these outcomes, it becomes clear that many of those who require social assistance have come to this situation through a process of exclusion that probably started early in their lives. For example, results from the FMP demonstrate that many teen mothers who required social assistance had become disengaged from their homes and/or from the school system before they became pregnant. Because there are no simple predispositional factors, there are no quick-fix answers (Lochhead and Scott, 2000: vii). While researchers are coming to recognize the limits of 'either/or' approaches, so practitioners are coming to recognize that successful programming must be multi-faceted rather than unidimensional (Blanco, 1994: 179; Torjman, 1996: 15; Catano, 1998; Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1998: 1).

If we accept that there is no 'one answer' and particularly no 'one answer' for the diversity of real people who require social assistance, we have much more opportunity for success. After assessing a variety of employability approaches, the HRDC report states: "mixed strategy programs appear to yield the best results with respect to helping clients find work when these programs focus on the individual need of clients" (1996, Section 4.1).

While social interventions never offer the whole answer, they almost always offer partial answers, or answers for particular groups of people. For example, while the availability of childcare does not provide the whole answer for lone-parent employability initiatives, it is a necessary part of a platform of services. As indicated by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):

> For those who enter lone-parenthood with existing skills and experience that enable them to compete successfully in the labour market, the issue is the retention and continuing improvement of their competitive edge. For this group, the availability of appropriate and affordable child care may be the primary supporting policy required. There are, however, those who come to lone-parenthood with existing disadvantages: low educational attainment, few, if any, skills, and little, or no, relevant work experience. For this group, lone-parenthood exacerbates an existing problem but does not, by itself, create it... Affordable child care may be a necessary condition, but it is hardly

sufficient in the absense of employment-related skills and experience (Cleveland and Hyatt, 1996: I).

Childcare cannot address the fact that many lone-parent social-assistance recipients do not have marketable skills; however, good childcare facilities need to be available while the skill issue is being addressed (Armitage, 1996: 45; Cleveland and Hyatt, 1996: i). Bradshaw indicates that: "comparisons between lone mothers' employment rates in different countries... have identified cost differentials in childcare as the single factor that discriminates unambiguously between countries with high and low labour-force participation rates" (Baker and Tippin, 1999: 49-50).

Results from the FMP demonstrate that educational attainment is a primary filter for social-assistance usage. Those lone parents who become social-assistance clients have much lower levels of educational attainment and fewer employment credentials than mothers in general. However, there is also a gradient of education and skill levels in the social-assistance population, with those having the highest levels of education tending to exit from the system most quickly. While market-related training and job search support may be helpful for the most job-ready clients, life-skill training has been demonstrated to be one of the most effective methods for reintegrating larger numbers of social-assistance recipients into the labour force (Human Resources Development Canada, 1996, Section 3.4.1). Because social-assistance recipients, whether young or older, are likely to have experienced exclusion from their families and/or from the larger society through schools or the workforce, promoting employability is unlikely to be a simple matter of academic upgrading.

The difficulty with adopting an outcome approach to social policy development is that people become discouraged before they begin. The task seems so daunting that we do not know where to start. In the case of employability and poverty reduction, there are two main focal points: education and labour-market development (Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 1998; Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 45). There is little use in having a qualified workforce if there are no jobs for them to fill and there is little use in having jobs if the potential workers are not qualified. No matter what their political persuasion, those who have seriously studied the issue of social assistance have come to a similar

conclusion - education is an important factor (Lochhead and Scott, 2000: 45; Robeson and Scarth, 1997: xi; Miller, 1990: 64).

While other measures such as child support may attack one aspect of the social-assistance expenditure equation, gains in education have the potential to reduce the number of clients, reduce the length of time on social assistance, and diminish recidivism. However, the task of addressing inequities in educational attainment is not easy. The effects of educational attainment probably have as much or more to do with the fact that education is a proxy for social exclusion, as they have to do with education as a measurement of demonstrable skills. Young people who leave the school system usually have a host of other issues that are equally, or more, difficult to address. While educational attainment has a slight direct effect on social-assistance requirements because of diminished employment prospects, it has a stronger indirect effect on social-assistance requirements because of the connection between low educational attainment and single parenting.

Continued engagement in the school system and the completion of Grade 12 have the potential to reduce the probability of requiring social assistance. Amongst FMP respondents, women who started parenting in 1978 without having completed Grade 12 were 4 times more likely than those who had completed Grade 12 to require income assistance at some time while they were raising their children. Yet, evaluations of employability initiatives for social-assistance recipients demonstrate that academic upgrading is not always successful in moving clients off of social assistance (Human Resources Development Canada, 1996: 7, 12). This may be because the attainment of Grade 12 is most importantly a marker of social inclusion/exclusion. Teenage mothers exemplify the connection between early school leaving, social exclusion, and social assistance. These young mothers usually require social assistance because they have low levels of education and few marketable skills with which to support themselves and their children. However, their low educational attainment and early child bearing are rooted in a process of exclusion, the consequences of which cannot be overcome by simple skill training.

In the US, when people took a closer look at the real needs of social-assistance recipients, some felt the financial resources required to really address their problems were too great (Mead, 1996: 71-72). However, failure

to address the issues of inequity and social exclusion, can lead to major costs, not only for social assistance, but also for other budgets such as health and justice (Health Canada, 1994; Zigler and Styfco, 1996: 152).

If we are not able to help parents, we sacrifice their productive and social capacity and also the productive and social capacity of many of their children. There is every indication that Canada's competitive standing in the global economy will come from our ability to foster human-resource development. We cannot afford to abandon whole segments of our population. Furthermore, the majority of young social-assistance clients are drawn from families who had previously required assistance themselves. Comprehensive programming that supports the sons/daughters of today's social-assistance clients has the potential to significantly reduce future demands for social assistance.

The increasing emphasis on early intervention and prevention has arisen from the stark realization that it is very difficult to reintegrate people into society once they have been excluded (Kagan, 1996: 157). Results of the FMP indicate that the most effective means of reducing expenditures for health, justice, and social services will probably come from keeping young people engaged in the school system. Maintaining a young person's connection to the larger society through engagement in the school system can reduce experiences of social exclusion and its associated negative consequences. However, it is clear that much of the disadvantage exhibited through the school system is connected with disadvantage in the home, making intervention a much more difficult process. The next report from the FMP will examine more closely the factors that set the context for young people to complete rather than leave school.

Sources

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Notes

1. This number excludes 26 of the original mother-child dyads because: the mother died, the child died, the child was adopted or the child was made a ward of the court before the time of the 10-year data collection.

2. Results from the FMP and other research studies indicate that the life circumstances of mothers living common law tend to look more similar to their single than married counterparts (Dechman, 2000: a; Statistics Canada, 1998: 2; National Council of Welfare, 1999b: 4). Both single mothers and mothers in common-law relationships tend to have significantly lower levels of education and less stable family structures. Only a minority of common-law unions remain intact over the course of the child-rearing period.

3. Single means mothers who never have been married.

4. The wife's income exceeds the husband's income in approximately one quarter of Nova Scotia husband-wife families (McFadyen, 2000: 6).

5. Only approximately 1 percent of the lone-parent social-assistance clients in Nova Scotia are widows.

6. Single lone parents constitute approximately 62 percent of all lone parents on the Nova Scotia social-assistance caseload.

7. Nova Scotia Department of Community Services statistics indicate that lone parents constitute approximately one-third of the social-assistance caseload.

8. Persons with disabilities who require social assistance tend to have longer-term requirements.

9. The findings reported for the Family Mosaic Project are based on weighted data. Weighting procedures are described in the methodology report. The unweighted number of cases on which the estimates have been prepared are reported in the tables, endnotes, and/or the appendix.

10. Poverty is defined as falling below Statistics Canada's low-income cutoffs. The general cross-sectional poverty rate for lone-parent families is approximately 56 percent (Ross et al, 2000: 40). Phi and Cramer's V are used as measures of association for nominal data. "Cramer's V can only be thought of as a magnitude on a scale between zero and one; the bigger the number the stronger the association. It can not be interpreted, for example, as the percentage of variation in one variable explained by another, nor can it be interpreted as the proportion of predictive errors which may be reduced by prior knowledge of one of the variables" (Loether and McTavish, 1974: 197, 198). * means p <= .05, ** means p <= .01, *** means p <= .001.

11. In 1996, 75 percent of lone parents with children under 6, and 60 percent of lone parents with children under 17, were living in poverty (Human Resources Development Canada, 2000a).

12. There were insufficient cases to give accurate estimates for the common-law groups, however, these mothers also had high rates of poverty. Twenty-nine percent of mothers who had been living common law and were 19 years of age or under when their first child was born were living in poverty when that child reached 20 years of age (N = 17). Forty-six percent of women who

were living common law and were over 19 years of age when their first child was born were living in poverty when that child reached 20 years of age (N = 13).

13. Somers' d is a measure of association used for ordinal data. The measure reported is asymmetric with extended poverty specified as the dependent variable.

14. Somers' d is asymmetric with extended poverty specified as the dependent variable (Loether and McTavish, 1974).

15. Unweighted N 158 mothers who had received social assistance at some time.

16. Approximately 80 percent of current Nova Scotia income-assistance clients who have dependent children are lone parents.

17. Approximately one third of lone parents who are receiving social assistance in Nova Scotia are also receiving some type of child or spousal support.

18.

Variables	Mean	SD
months of employment	240	152.3
years of education	12.6	2.5
mothers initial opinion about employment	2.4	1.2

Variables	r
employment by education	.34***
employment by initial opinion	.14**
education by initial opinion	.10*

-2 Log Likelihood 311.720.; Goodness of Fit = 359.145

19. Unweighted N = 188 continuously married mothers for whom there is total work history information. Somers' d is asymmetric with receipt of income assistance as the dependent variable.

20. Unweighted N = 135 mothers who received social assistance at some time.

21. Unweighted N = 158 mothers who had received social assistance. Data from the National Council of Welfare indicate that among lone-parent social-assistance recipients 6,827 have primary school, 21,893 have secondary school, and 2,399 have post-secondary. Thus, only approximately 8 percent have any post-secondary training. Among social-assistance recipients in Nova Scotia, sixty-one percent of the lone parents who reported their education had not completed Grade 12. While this can be interpreted as a general indicator of low educational attainment, it should not be quoted as an exact amount because there is a substantial proportion of the social-assistance caseload for whom education is not recorded.

22. Unweighted N = 147 mothers who had received social assistance and for whom there was total work-history information.

23. Unweighted N = 120 lone mothers for whom there is total social-assistance history information.

24. Unweighted N = 18 continuously married mothers for whom there was total social-assistance history information. Three-quarters of the continuously-married mothers who had ever received social assistance had needed such public income support for less than one year.

25. r refers to Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. For information on this measure of association see Loether and McTavish, 1974.

26. The mother's attitude about employment at the time of the 20-year interview was operationalized using a four-part four-point scale including the following split-choice options:

    If you were advising a new mother about whether or not to give up her job when the baby was born, would you recommend:

that she keep her job because it might be difficult to get another one	that she give up her job, if she could possibly manage it

    When children are under school age:

you think it is possible for parents to work full time and meet their children's needs if they have flexible jobs	you think it is almost impossible to work full time and meet the needs of young children
it doesn't hurt for mothers to be employed part time when their children are under school age	unless mothers have to be employed, it is best for them to be at home until their children are school age

    Once children reach school age, would you say:

it is fine for mothers to be employed while their children are at school	it is best if mothers are not employed even while children are at school

    In a two-parent family where both the mother and father have jobs that offer good salaries and the opportunity to work less than full time without negative consequences, do you feel it would be best for:

the father to be employed full time and the mother to be at home with the children	for both the mother and father to spend less time working so that they can share the responsibilities of caring for their children

    Cronbach Alpha = .60. A high score indicates the most liberal attitudes and a low score indicates the most conservative attitudes.

27. The correlation between the percentage of time of lone parenting and the length of social-assistance usage is .69*** when selecting only lone parents.

28.

Variables	Mean	SD
total social assistance in months	59.45	70.13
mother's opinion about employment/care-giving mix	10.23	2.23
mother's total number of years of education at the time of the 20-year data collection	11.84	2.42
proportion of time for which the mother had neither married not living common law	0.34	0.31
total number of months of employment	115.75	69.88

29. One might expect human capital to have even more of an impact on the length of time that lone parents remain on social assistance today because of the enhanced employability focus.

30. Unweighted N = 422.

31. Unweighted N = 357.

32. Unweighted N: ever received social assistance = 39, never received social assistance = 348, total = 387.

33. Census data for the entire country in 1991 showed that 93 percent of unmarried daughters and 91 percent of unmarried sons ages 15 to 19 were living with at least one parent (Boyd and Norris, 1995: 15).

34. Approximately 60 percent of the respondents for the FMP who were receiving social assistance at the time of the 1999 interview had a dependent child. This could be because lone mothers tend to remain on social assistance longer than other young people. Caseload statistics from the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services indicate that the percentage of clients in this age group who have dependent children ranges between 50 and 60 percent.

35. Weighted data N = 392. These correlations are even higher if one specifically selects for daughters. Among daughters the correlation between early home leaving and the presence of children is Phi = .46***, between early home leaving and early school leaving Phi = 49***, between early school leaving and the presence of children Phi = .47***. The National Literacy Secretariat also has highlighted the connection between traumatic childhood events, literacy, and educational deficits (Smith, 1999).

36. Unweighted N: total youth = 387, youth who had received social assistance = 39.

37. As Caragata states "The economic prospects of those who are on welfare, and have other issues associated with being on welfare, such as family dysfunction, poor school achievement, poor housing, less good health and health care, are simply grim" (1999: 108).

38. Unweighted N: 224 young women and 197 young men.

39. Unweighted N = 33 young adults who were receiving social assistance at the time of the 20-year interview.

40. There were a few young lone-parent fathers but this was much less common than young lone-parent mothers. While there were insufficient cases to provide any thorough analysis of young lone-parent fathers, it appears their lives were similar to the lives of the young lone-parent mothers in that they were often struggling to provide for their children.

41. This should not be taken as a direct comparison of the lives of the mothers and daughters because the mothers represented varying age groups while the daughters are one consistent age cohort. Unweighted N = 224 young women.

42. Unweighted N = 39 young women who left the school system before completing Grade 12.

43. Only 13 percent of those who had completed high school or had some type of trade certificate, had a dependent child (Statistics Canada, 1996b)

44. This is stronger than the earlier reported correlation between early school leaving and early child bearing because it focuses specifically on young women.

45. Because only 39 of the young women in the FMP left school before completing Grade 12, the sample size is too small to provide a numeric comparison of the lives of the young women who indicated they had left school because of pregnancy and the young women who indicated they left school for other reasons. Approximately half of the young mothers said they had left school because of pregnancy and half said they had left school for some other reason.

46. As the World Development Bank reports, "poverty means powerlessness and voicelessness, and vulnerability to fear" (2001: v).

47. US researchers report that "among women who both had a baby and dropped out of school, the probability of eventually graduating was virtually identical regardless of the order of events" (Upchurch and McCarthy, 1990: 227 and 228). Findings from the FMP show many of the young women who indicated they had left the school system because of pregnancy, had more than one child by the time they were 20.

48. This finding includes both young women and young men. Unweighted N = 27 young women and young men who had left the school system and had a dependent child.

49. Results from the Census demonstrate that among the 20-24 age group in 1996: 71 percent had both completed Grade 12 and did not have a dependent child, 7 percent had completed Grade 12 and had a child, 17 percent had not completed Grade 12 and did not have a dependent child, and 5 percent had not completed Grade 12 and had a dependent child. Among Nova Scotia social-assistance recipients age 20-24 in 2001: 12 percent had both completed Grade 12 and did not have a dependent child, 18 percent had completed Grade 12 and had a child, 26 percent had not completed Grade 12 and did not have a dependent child, and 44 percent had not completed Grade 12 and had a dependent child. The educational statistics for the Nova Scotia Department of Community Services caseload should not be taken as exact figures because there is a significant amount of missing information on the education variable. However, this information reinforces the general information derived from the FMP.

50. Along with the negative stereotypes associated with early parenting come assumptions that these young parents are more likely to be abusive to their children. US data indicates that educational attainment rather than age is related to child abuse and neglect (Miller, 1990: 44).

51. Other than education, none of the differences between young mothers and other young women were statistically significant.

52. Unweighted N = 40 young adults who had received social assistance. There is a slightly stronger inter-generation correlation between social-assistance usage for young men (Phi =.35***) than young women (Phi = .32***). Unweighted N for young women = 204. Unweighted N for young men = 176. This occurs, not because young men are more likely to require assistance, but rather, because young people in families that have not received social assistance are very unlikely to qualify for assistance unless they are lone parents.

53. Weighted data N = 361.

54. -2 Log Likelihood = 219.843; Goodness of Fit 320.291

55. This indicates that correlation between social assistance usage and number of characteristics. See Table 19 for variable definition.

56. "Many of the characteristics that make intractable problems intractable point to the inability of separating these problems from the entire socio-political-economic system" (Blanco, 2000: 163).

Appendix for FMP Social Assistance Report
Tables Pertaining to Mothers' Social-Assistance Usage

The percentages given in these tables are based on weighted data with the unweighted number of cases provided in parentheses at the bottom of each column.

Table 1

Poverty Status When Child was 10 By Marital Status When Child was 10

	Marital Status	
Poverty Status	No Partner	Partner
Living in Poverty	77%	17%
Not Living in Poverty	23%	83%
Total Unweighted N	(65)	(401)

Phi = .44***

Table 2

Poverty Status When Child was 20 By Marital Status When Child was 20

	Marital Status	
Poverty Status	No Partner	With Partner
Living in Poverty	42%	5%
Not Living in Poverty	58%	95%
Total Unweighted N	(96)	(322)

Phi = .44***

Table 3

Poverty Status When Child was 10 and/or 20 By Overall Marital Status

	Overall Marital Status	
Poverty Status	Continuously Married	Lone Parent at Some Time
Living in Poverty When Child was 10 *and* 20	2%	17%
Living in Poverty When Child was 10 *or* 20	15%	28%
Not Living in Poverty When Child was Either 10 or 20	83%	56%
Total Unweighted N	(180)	(211)

Cramer's V = .33***

Table 4

Poverty Status When Child was 20 By Marital Status and Age When First Child was Born

	Marital Status and Age When First Child was Born			
Poverty Status	Single and 19 or Under	Single and Over 19	Married and 19 or Under	Married and Over 19
Living in Poverty	26%	30%	17%	6%
Not Living in Poverty	74%	70%	83%	94%
Total Unweighted N	(81)	(40)	(82)	(185)

Cramer's V = .26***

Table 5

Among Mothers Who Were Continuously Married: Poverty Status at 10 and/or 20-Year Data Collections By Educational Attainment When First Child was Born

	Educational Attainment		
Poverty Status	Grade 9 or Less	Grade 10 or 11	Grade 12 or More
Living in Poverty at 10 *and* 20 Year Data Collection	12%	0%	0%
Living in Poverty at 10 *or* 20 Year Data Collection	20%	20%	12%
Not Living in Poverty at Either 10 or 20 Year Data Collection	68%	80%	88%
Total Unweighted N	(10)	(43)	(96)

Somer's d with Poverty Status Dependent = .10**

Among Lone-Parent Families: Poverty Status at 10 and/or 20-Year Data Collections By Educational Attainment When First Child was Born

	Educational Attainment		
Poverty Status	Grade 9 or Less	Grade 10 or 11	Grade 12 or More
Living in Poverty at 10 *and* 20 Year Data Collection	42%	8%	6%
Living in Poverty at 10 *or* 20 Year Data Collection	31%	27%	22%
Not Living in Poverty at Either 10 or 20 Year Data Collection	28%	65%	72%
Total Unweighted N	(54)	(73)	(66)

Somer's d with Poverty Status Dependent = .29***

Table 6

Overall Social-Assistance Requirements By Overall Marital Status

	Overall Marital Status	
Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	Lone Parent at Some Time	Continuously Married
Received Social Assistance at Some Time	54%	7%
Never Received Social Assistance	46%	93%
Total Unweighted N	(231)	(207)

Phi = .52***

Table 7

Overall Social-Assistance Requirements By Lone Parenting Status

	Lone-Parenting Status	
Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	Single Lone Parent	Divorced Lone Parent
Received Social Assistance at Some Time	63%	48%
Never Received Social Assistance	37%	52%
Total Unweighted N	(121)	(110)

Phi = .15**

Table 8

Among Lone-Parent Mothers: Overall Social-Assistance Requirements By Child Support Received

	Child Support Received by Lone-Parent Mothers	
Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	Received Regular Child Support	Did Not Receive Regular Child Support
Received Social Assistance at Some Time	54%	65%
Never Received Social Assistance	46%	35%
Total Unweighted N	(55)	(102)

Phi = -.11 NS

Table 9

Among Mothers Who Were Lone Parents At Some Time: Overall Social-Assistance Requirements By Educational Attainment When First Child was Born

	Educational Attainment		
Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	Grade 9 or Less	Grade 10 or 11	Grade 12 or More
Received Social Assistance at Some Time	84%	60%	30%
Never Received Social Assistance	16%	40%	70%
Total Unweighted N	(62)	(76)	(73)

Somer's d with social assistance dependent = .35***

Table 10

Among Lone Mothers: Overall Social-Assistance Requirements By Labour-Force Attachment

	Number of Years of Employment			
Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	5 or Less	more than 5 to 10	more than 10 to 15	Over 15
Received Social Assistance at Some Time	88%	86%	54%	29%
Never Received Social Assistance	12%	14%	46%	71%
Total Unweighted N	(37)	(38)	(48)	(92)

Somer's d with social assistance dependent = .40***

Table 11

Overall Social-Assistance Requirements By Employment Status Before First Child Was Born

	Employment Status	
Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	Employed	Not Employed
Received Social Assistance at Some Time	38%	69%
Never Received Social Assistance	62%	31%
Total Unweighted N	(90)	(121)

Phi = .31***

Table 12

Among Mothers Who Were Lone Parents At Some Time: Overall Social-Assistance Requirements By Traditional Views of Mothering When First Child was Born

	Mothers Should Not Work Outside the Home			
Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	Completely Agreed	Mostly Agreed	Mixed	Completely or Mostly Disagreed
Received Social Assistance at Some Time	67%	58%	45%	43%
Never Received Social Assistance	33%	42%	55%	57%
Total Unweighted N	(71)	(37)	(68)	(35)

Somer's d with social assistance dependent = .14***

Table 13

Training Received After First Child Was Born By Overall Social-Assistance Requirements

	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	
Training Received	Received Social Assistance at Some Time	Never Received Social Assistance
Training After First Child Was Born	77%	58%
No Training After First Child Was Born	23%	42%
Total Unweighted N	(152)	(272)

Phi = .18***

Table 14

Among Mothers Who Started Parenting With Grade 9 or Less Education: Training Received After First Child Was Born By Overall Social-Assistance Requirements

	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements	
Training Received	Received Social Assistance At Some Time	Never Received Social Assistance
Training After First Child Was Born	70%	43%
No Training After First Child Was Born	30%	57%
Total Unweighted N	(56)	(15)

Phi = .24***

Table 14 Continued
Among Mothers Who Started Parenting With Grade 10 or 11 Education: Training Received After First Child Was Born By Overall Social-Assistance Requirements

Training Received	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Received Social Assistance At Some Time	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Never Received Social Assistance
Training After First Child Was Born	80%	53%
No Training After First Child Was Born	20%	47%
Total Unweighted N	(47)	(72)

Phi = .26**

Table 14 Continued

Among Mothers Who Started Parenting With Grade 12 or More Education: Training Received After First Child Was Born By Overall Social-Assistance Requirements

Training Received	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Received Social Assistance At Some Time	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Never Received Social Assistance
Training After First Child Was Born	87%	62%
No Training After First Child Was Born	13%	38%
Total Unweighted N	(27)	(154)

Phi = .24**

Table 15

Among Lone-Parent Mothers: Training Received After First Child Was Born By Overall Social-Assistance Requirements

Training Received	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Received Social Assistance At Some Time	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Never Received Social Assistance
Training After First Child Was Born	79%	72%
No Training After First Child Was Born	21%	28%
Total Unweighted N	(131)	(94)

Phi = .08 NS

Table 15 Continued

Among Continuously Married Mothers: Training Received After First Child Was Born By Overall Social-Assistance Requirements

Training Received	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Received Social Assistance At Some Time	Overall Social-Assistance Requirements: Never Received Social Assistance
Training After First Child Was Born	71%	53%
No Training After First Child Was Born	29%	47%
Total Unweighted N	(21)	(178)

Phi = .10*

Tables Pertaining to Sons'/Daughters' Social-Assistance Usage

The percentages given in these tables are based on weighted data with the unweighted number of cases provided in parentheses at the bottom of each column.

Table 16

Social-Assistance Requirements By Young Adults' School Completion

Social-Assistance Requirements Before Age 20	School Completion: Left School Before Completing Grade 12 and Never Returned	School Completion: Left School But Completed Grade 12	School Completion: Completed Grade 12 Without Interruption	School Completion: Completed Grade 12 and Pursued Post-Secondary Training
Personally Received Social Assistance	30%	19%	11%	2%
Never Personally Received Social Assistance	70%	81%	89%	98%
Total Unweighted N	(63)	(25)	(52)	(281)

Somer's d with social assistance dependent = .18***

Table 17

Social-Assistance Requirements By Separated From Parental Home

	Separated From Parental Home Before Age 18	
Social-Assistance Requirements Before Age 20	Left Family Home	Remained With Family
Personally Received Social Assistance	43%	3%
Never Personally Received Social Assistance	57%	97%
Total Unweighted N	(37)	(350)

Phi = .42***

Table 18

Social-Assistance Requirements By Child Bearing

	Child Bearing	
Social-Assistance Requirements Before Age 20	Dependent Child	No Dependent Child
Personally Received Social Assistance	56%	3%
Never Personally Received Social Assistance	44%	97%
Total Unweighted N	(40)	(380)

Phi = .51***

Table 19
Combination of Early Home Leaving, Early School Leaving, and Early Child Bearing with Social-Assistance Usage

	Total Number of Characteristics of Early Home Leaving, Early School Leaving, and/or Early Child Bearing			
Social-Assistance Usage	none of the 3 characteristics	1 characteristic	2 characteristics	all 3 characteristics
received social assistance	1%	13%	30%	94%
did not receive social assistance	99%	87%	70%	6%
Unweighted N	(286)	(66)	(23)	(12)

r = -.53***

Table 20

Among Young Adults Who Did Not Have A Dependent Child: Social-Assistance Requirements By Gender

Social-Assistance Requirements Before Age 20	Gender: Young Women Without Dependent Child	Gender: Young Men Without Dependent Child
Personally Received Social Assistance	3%	4%
Never Personally Received Social Assistance	97%	96%
Total Unweighted N	(193)	(186)

Phi = -.02 NS

Among Young Adults Who Had A Dependent Child: Social-Assistance Requirements By Gender

Social-Assistance Social-Assistance Before Age 20	Gender: Young Women With Dependent Child	Gender: Young Men With Dependent Child
Personally Received Social Assistance	65%	25%
Never Personally Received Social Assistance	35%	75%
Total Unweighted N	(30)	(10)

Phi = .32*

Table 21

Young Adults' Social-Assistance Requirements By Mothers' Overall Social-Assistance Requirements

Sons'/Daughters' Social-Assistance Requirements Before Age 20	Mothers' Overall Social-Assistance Social-Assistance: Received Social Assistance at Some Time	Mothers' Overall Social-Assistance Social-Assistance: Never Received Social Assistance
Personally Received Social Assistance	20%	2%
Never Personally Received Social Assistance	80%	98%
Total Unweighted N	(131)	(250)

Phi = .33***